THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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Sanju Samson thanks the heavens after helping India win on Sunday | DEBADATTA MALLICK

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ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP

SURYA & CO SEAL SEMIFINAL BERTH, FACE ENGLAND IN MUMBAI ON MAR 5

The defending champions defeat West Indies in Kolkata in the virtual quarterfinal of the T20 World Cup on Sunday. A look...

CLINICAL INDIA CRUISE PAST WEST INDIES

It was an evening where a lot of things fell in place for India. First, they won the toss and opted to field. Then, Jasprit Bumrah put brakes on WI with a two-wicket over as they finished with 195/4 thanks to Jason Holder (34 n.o) & Rovman Powell (37 n.o). When India lost Ishan Kishan and Abhishek Sharma early, Sanju Samson stood tall to see through the chase.

SAMSON SEIZES THE MOMENT AT BIG STAGE

- Brought in to support Abhishek's poor run in Chennai, Samson saved his best for the must-win clash against West Indies
- Samson set the tone up front, and continued to pile on while wickets fell around him. The Kerala batter smashed an unbeaten 97 from just 50 balls to make a statement when India needed him the most | P13

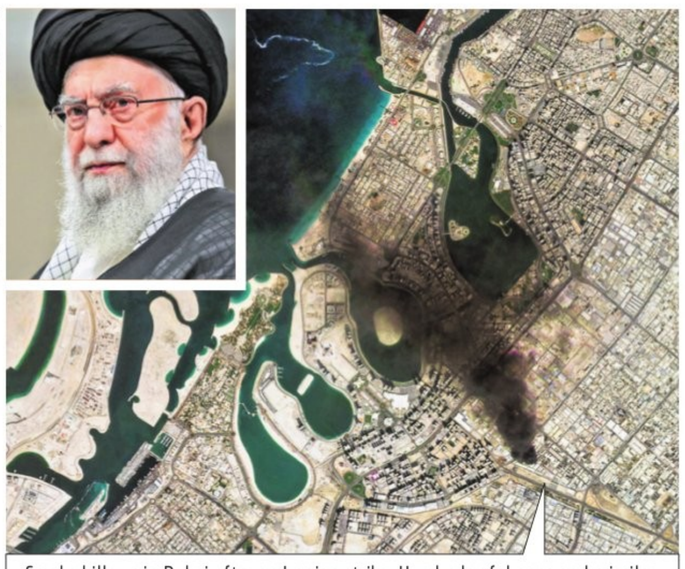
97 n.o

SANJU SAMSON SEALED THE SF SPOT WITH A 97 N.O FROM 50 BALLS

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

War escalates after US-Israeli airstrikes kill Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei; Tehran goes on the offensive, hits US allies in Gulf; leaders urge restraint

This videograb combo shows the sequence of large-scale strikes on "the headquarters of the Iranian terror regime" in Tehran on March 1 | PTI



Smoke billows in Dubai after an Iranian strike. Hundreds of drones and missiles targeted UAE and other Gulf allies of the US after Khamenei's death | AFP

DANGEROUS ESCALATION

AGENCIES @ Tehran/Tel Aviv

IRANIAN Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was assassinated by Israel and the United States in a major attack on Iran, throwing the future of the Islamic Republic into doubt and raising the risk of protracted regional instability.

News agency IRNA announced the 86-year-old's death on Sunday after a joint US- Israeli aerial bombardment targeted Iranian military and governmental sites.

US President Donald Trump threatened that the "heavy and pinpoint bombing" would continue through the week.

The head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard, Major General Mohammad Pakpour, was also declared dead in airstrikes. Also killed was Ali Shamkhani, long a figurehead within Iran's security establishment, IRNA said. Among the other top officials who died in the strikes were Iran police intelligence chief Gholamreza Rezaian and the chief of armed forces, Abdolrahim Mousavi.

WAR WATCH

The Israeli army announced "large-scale" strikes targeting the "heart of Tehran" for the second day running.

Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz said Khamenei's killing was a "turning point". Iran formed an interim leadership council to take over.

Sources said Ayatollah Alireza Arafi was part of it, alongside President Masoud Pezeshkian and Chief Justice Mohseni-Eje'i. The body will rule until a new leader is selected.

In retaliation, Iran fired missiles across the Middle East and Israel, while Israel conducted fresh strikes on Tehran.

In Israel, at least nine people were killed as Iranian missiles hit a synagogue in Beit Shemesh.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said the killing of Khamenei was a "declaration of war against Muslims", vowing vengeance. Iran's security chief Ali Larijani vowed to hit the US and Israel with "a force never seen before."

In the UAE, three people had died and 58 wounded, forcing it to shutter its embassy in Iran and recalling its ambassador.

In Kuwait, one person was killed and 32 were reportedly wounded. The US military said three service members were killed in the Iran operation.

Meanwhile, Trump said he would "be talking" to Iranian leaders. "They want to talk, and I have agreed to talk."

Iranian Red Crescent revised the death toll from an Israeli strike on a school in Minab on Saturday to 108.

As crisis deepens, India braces for economic impact

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

AS the war between Iran and US-Israel escalates, India is bracing for a range of macroeconomic adversity. Crude oil prices, which had already been firming up amid rising tension, shot up from around $65 per barrel to $72-73 per barrel over the past few days. Going forward, the volatility in oil, currency, and equity markets is expected to remain high.

At the heart of the economic concern is the Strait of Hormuz, through which nearly 20% of global petroleum liquids and a fifth of global LNG shipments transit. India, which consumes 5.5 million barrels of crude oil per day and imports more than 80% of its requirement, is particularly exposed. Around 1.5-2 million barrels per day of India's crude imports pass through this narrow corridor. In FY25, nearly 50% of India's crude oil imports and 54% of LNG imports were routed via Hormuz. Any disruption — or even the perception of risk — can inject a geopolitical premium into oil prices.

For every $1/barrel rise in Brent price, there would be an impact of ₹0.52/litre on diesel and ₹0.55/litre on petrol retail prices

Madhavi Arora, Economist, Emkay Global

India sources a substantial portion of its crude from West Asia. While refiners can diversify supplies to the US, Africa or South America, global oil benchmarks determine pricing. Elevated crude prices would still translate into a higher import bill.

Experts warn that the macroeconomic transmission to India is imminent; higher crude prices raise fuel and transportation costs, feeding into broader inflation. Manoranjan Sharma, chief economist at Informerics Ratings, said the immediate consequence would be rising inflationary pressure triggered by higher energy prices.

Modi chairs CCS meet to review situation

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi chaired a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) on Sunday night to review the rapidly escalating situation in West Asia following the attack on Iran by the United States and Israel and the killing of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Modi landed in the national capital around 9.30 pm after wrapping up a two-day tour of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Puducherry and Tamil Nadu.

The CCS, headed by the Prime Minister, includes Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as other members.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, principal secretaries to the prime minister, P K Mishra and Shaktikanta Das, Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Cabinet Secretary T V Somanathan and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri also attended.

Sources said the discussions focused on the safety of Indian nationals in the region. Nearly 10,000 Indians are in Iran, over 40,000 in Israel, and about nine million across West Asia and the Gulf.

With flight services disrupted due to the military escalation in West Asia, hundreds of Indians are stranded in Dubai and other key hub airports.

350 flights of Indian carriers cancelled

New Delhi: Airlines from India announced cancellation of all flights to the region. The Civil Aviation Ministry said 350 flights operated by Indian carriers stood cancelled on Sunday. Airlines have announced full refund or rescheduling of all tickets booked until March 5 or 7, a source with DGCA said | P9

22 killed in Pak, protests in Kashmir, MP

Islamabad/Srinagar: Following Khamenei's killing, protests erupted across the world. In Pakistan, 10 people were killed as hundreds of protesters tried to storm the US consulate in Karachi, while 12 were killed elsewhere.Shia Muslims joined demonstrations in Kashmir and Bhopal too, many chanting anti-Israel and anti-US slogans | P11

15 Indians evacuated from oil tanker

New Delhi: An oil tanker carrying 20 crew members, including 15 Indians and five Iranians, and an Omani port near the strategic Strait of Hormuz were targeted in strikes on Sunday, marking the first reported attacks on Oman since Tehran launched retaliatory operations

Israel calls up reservists

Tel Aviv: The Israeli military said it was calling up almost 100,000 reservists as part of its ongoing campaign of strikes against arch-foe Iran named Roaring Lion, the IDF said

Emergency ops centres activated in all districts

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

WITH the prevailing situation in West Asia and closure of airspace by several countries, the Karnataka government has fully activated its state and district Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) to assist stranded passengers, particularly Kannadigas affected by widespread flight disruptions.

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, who also serves as vice-chairman of the Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority, said international flight operations have been significantly disrupted following NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) declarations issued by multiple countries. As per the latest advisory from the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the airspace over Iran, Israel, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, the UAE and Qatar remains closed up to March 2.

Passengers stranded at KIA in Bengaluru on Sunday | KEVIN NASHON

The disruption has left a large number of passengers from various countries, including Karnataka, stranded in affected Middle Eastern countries, particularly in the UAE (Dubai). CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

MAHA TRAGEDY

Blast at explosives plant kills at least 17

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

AT least 17 people were killed and 18 others critically injured in a major explosion at an ammunition manufacturing company near Nagpur on Sunday morning. A powerful blast occurred at 7.00 am, triggering massive flames in the Nonal crimping plant area, which spread to adjoining sections of the facility located in Raulgaon village, approximately 25 km from Nagpur city.

Sources said 35 workers and two supervisors were present at the time of the incident. A new shift had begun at 6 am.

The bodies were charred beyond recognition. Samples of the family members were being taken for DNA testing, the police said. The factory belonged to a major manufacturer of industrial explosives, including materials used for mining and infrastructure projects, such as detonators and explosive cartridges.

The incident comes a day after a blast at a cracker unit in Andhra Pradesh's Kakinada district claimed 21 lives.

FIR against RTO official for 10,210 illegal FCs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
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AFTER a departmental probe, the Karnataka Transport Department has filed a first information report (FIR) against an official of the Bengaluru Central Regional Transport Office (RTO) for allegedly issuing fitness certificates (FCs) to over 10,210 vehicles, largely from Gujarat, Maharashtra and Kerala, without inspection. The FIR also names vehicle owners as accused.

The FIR was registered at the HSR Layout Police Station following allegations on February 28 by Regional Transport Officer Deepak L after directions from senior officials. The action follows a complaint by advocate S Nataraj Sharma to the transport commissioner.

A departmental inquiry was ordered and a joint transport commissioner conducted an inspection on February 19, examining data available on the Vahan portal. Preliminary findings revealed that retired senior motor vehicle inspector Nisar Ahmed issued Form 38A certificates between August 1, 2025 and January 31, 2026.

The Gujarat transport commissioner's office had earlier flagged the issuance of certificates to 41 Gujarat-registered vehicles through email, following which Nisar Ahmed was suspended on January 20. He retired on January 31.

Based on the inquiry report submitted on February 27, the transport commissioner directed registration of a criminal case. The police have registered a case against Nisar Ahmed and the vehicle owners under criminal breach of trust and cheating under BNS.

Most vehicles from Gujarat, Maha & Kerala

Retired senior motor vehicle inspector Nisar Ahmed allegedly issued the fitness certificates without inspection

The issue was flagged by the Gujarat transport commissioner, after which Nisar Ahmed was suspended on January 20. He retired on Jan 31

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ALMANAC TODAY

- **Monday:** 02.03.2026
- **Year:** Vishwavasu
- **Ayana:** Uttharayana
- **Ritu:** Sishir
- **Masa:** Phalguna
- **Paksha:** Sukla
- **Tithi:** Chaturdasi 5.37 pm
- **Nakshatra:** Ashlesha 7.41 am
- **Moon in** Simha Rashi
- **Rahukaala:** 07:30 am to 09:00 am
- **Gulikakala:** 01:30 pm to 03:00 pm
- **Yamaganda:** 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

WEATHER

MIN 20°C | MAX 33°C

FORECAST Cloudy

Sunrise 06.35 am | Sunset 06.28 pm | Moonrise 05.36 pm | Moonset 05.37 am

ASK, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN

AHEAD OF THE BUDGET BY CM SIDDARAMAIAH ON MARCH 6, VARIOUS SECTORS GIVE THEIR WISHLISTS

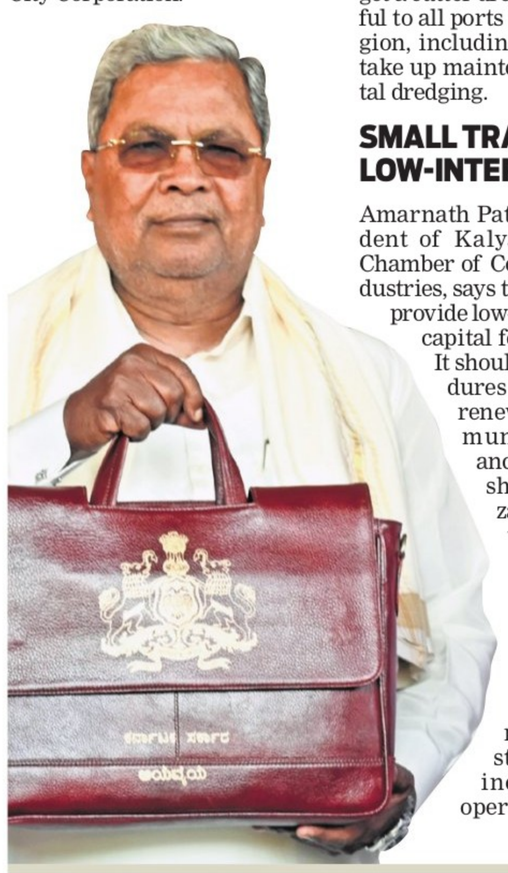
A BUDGET is not a document of mere numbers; it lets you sense the fiscal pulse of the state. It lays down the road map for the next financial year by injecting the right doses of funds into sectors that are vital for the state's growth and social stability. As Chief Minister Siddaramaiah prepares to present his 17th budget, a record, TNIE lets him know what the people expect from him -- not a Houdini's act but a programme rooted in realism, equity and growth

MYSURU NEEDS SPECIAL PACKAGE

Dr Vishnumurthy Shushrutha Hedna (Shushrutha Gowda), noted neurologist from Mysuru, expects CM Siddaramaiah, who also holds the Finance portfolio, to announce a special package for Mysuru district. "Mysuru represents heritage and tourism, the twin pillars of its growth. Both sectors require focused and sustained investment," says Gowda.

He emphasises the need to modernise and strengthen public healthcare infrastructure to ensure quality treatment during emergencies, and points out that essential infrastructure for yoga, sports, culture and industry in Mysuru remains inadequate. "The healthcare system is under severe strain. The CM should call for a long-term development blueprint keeping in mind needs for the next 20-30 years," he says.

Dr Gowda says that at least Rs 1,000 crore be earmarked in the budget for heritage conservation, sustainable development, and the formation and strengthening of the proposed Greater Mysuru City Corporation.



4TH STAGE FISHING JETTY FOR M'LURU

Chetan Bengre, president, Trawl Boat Owners' Association, says one of the major expectations of the fisheries sector is the construction of a fourth stage fishing jetty for Mangaluru to address congestion and improve berthing facilities at the harbour.

"Work on the third stage jetty is going on. We request the government to consider implementation of a fourth stage jetty as the existing facility is not sufficient for around 1,300 boats. Another major demand is full-scale dredging along the river shores and at Alive Bagilu, an estuary in Mangaluru, a confluence point where the Gurupura and Netravathi rivers merge and join the Arabian Sea near Bengre. Previously, Rs 29 crore was released for capital dredging from the dock to the estuary, but work is yet to start," he says.

Bengre says that at Alive Bagilu, due to accumulated sand, outgoing and incoming boats have chances of getting damaged due to accidents. Fishing community members say that in recent years, several boats have capsized or got damaged, hence it is not safe. "If dredging is taken up all along the shores of the Gurupura and Nethravathi, boats can be anchored anywhere. At present, loaded boats are unable to come close to the congested dock due to accumulated silt, as the boats touch the ground. Fishing boats are getting damaged, and incurring losses due to insufficient anchoring facility. Boat costs have increased and each boat costs Rs 1.60 crore. Fishing boats have to wait for long hours until other boats unload their catch," Bengre adds.

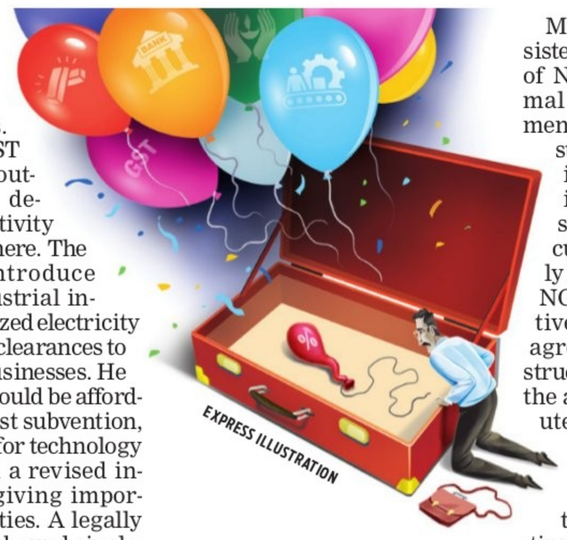
He urges the government to get a cutter dredger so it is helpful to all ports in the coastal region, including Mangaluru, to take up maintenance and capital dredging.

SMALL TRADERS SEEK LOW-INTEREST LOANS

Amarnath Patil, former president of Kalyana Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industries, says the budget should provide low-interest working capital for small traders. It should simplify procedures of trade-licence renewals and reduce municipal compliance burden. There should be rationalization of property tax and local levies affecting shops and commercial establishments.

Patil says businesses are relocating to neighbouring states due to better incentives, lower operational costs, or faster approvals. This results in GST revenue flowing outside Karnataka despite economic activity being generated here. The budget must introduce competitive industrial incentives, rationalized electricity tariffs, and faster clearances to retain existing businesses. He also feels there should be affordable credit, interest subvention, capital subsidies for technology upgradation and a revised industrial policy giving importance to Tier-2 cities. A legally enforceable, time-bound single-window clearance system must be implemented. Minimal inspections and regulatory stability will significantly boost investor confidence, he says.

Patil says that industrial and retail growth must expand beyond Bengaluru. Regions such as Kalyana Karnataka require higher allocation under Article 371(J), infrastructure connectivity and special incentives to create local employment and balanced development. He expects the CM would adopt a clear pro-retail and pro-industry approach.



IMPROVE INFRA IN INDUSTRIAL ESTATES

SC Patil, proprietor of Patil Industries, says the budget should focus on improving infrastructure in industrial estates, including internal roads and drainage systems, reliable water supply, stable and uninterrupted power supply.

Tamil Nadu and Telangana have strengthened their industrial infrastructure, making them attractive investment destinations. To maintain competitiveness, existing industrial estates should be modernized and plug-and-play facilities should be introduced, says Patil.

A simplified and time-bound digital approval mechanism is urgently required to improve ease of doing business. At present, State Industrial Region (SIR) charges and maintenance policies are high. Industries are burdened with unclear calculation methods. A GST-linked subsidy adjustment system would improve liquidity and build confidence among industrial investors. There should be allocations for the Belagavi-Hubballi railway line, road connectivity, and a subsidy for attracting FMCG clusters, says Patil.

ENHANCED SPENDING ON EDU SECTOR SOUGHT

Madan S, third-year B.Com student at NES Institute of Advanced Studies, Navule, Shivamogga, expects the budget to enhance investment in education. Government colleges should have smart classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and digital learning facilities.

Pre-matric and post-matric support need to be increased from Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000–Rs 20,000 per year to match rising education costs. Special scholarships for girls and fee reimbursement schemes will reduce financial stress. Hostel facilities are also an important expectation, including construction of new hostels for SC, ST, OBC, minorities and girl students. These hostels should provide free or subsidised accommodation, nutritious food, Wi-Fi and a safe study environment, helping rural students continue higher education.

BIG PICTURE

Students also expect laptop distribution, skill development programmes in accounting and data analytics, paid internships with stipends, and interest subsidies on education loans. Coaching support for CA, CMA, and banking exams would further improve career opportunities, says Madan.

He says better funding is needed for government hospitals. Expansion of health insurance coverage, mental health counselling in colleges, annual student health check-ups, and telemedicine services would help the public. Nutrition and hygiene support for girl students will empower them.

Transport benefits such as concessional bus passes, free travel schemes for women, and addition of new buses will reduce commuting costs. Overall, a student-friendly budget that strengthens education, hostel support, healthcare and transport will empower students and support social development, feels Madan.

HELP NGOs TO HELP GOVERNMENT

Environmentalist Sameer Majali seeks a policy framework that enables effective collaboration between government departments and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), particularly in the areas of forestry, horticulture and agriculture.

Majali says despite the consistent grassroots contributions of NGOs, there remains no formal provision within government budgets or administrative structures to facilitate meaningful partnerships. According to him, departments such as agriculture, horticulture, and forestry currently lack mechanisms that allow NGOs to collaborate on initiatives like afforestation and agroforestry. This absence of structured cooperation restricts the ability of NGOs to contribute effectively.

"We have been working in the tree plantation sector for the past 10 years, yet the forest department continues to say there is no provision to collaborate with us," Majali says. He says NGOs should not be viewed as external or competing entities but rather as partners capable of strengthening government-led welfare initiatives.

BENGALURU NEEDS MORE IT CORRIDORS

Krishna Kumar Gowda, a GCC consultant for strategy and innovation for various IT companies in Bengaluru, expects the CM to set aside at least Rs 2,000crore worth incentives for AI and tech parks in the budget. This allocation should fix infra like roads and water to create jobs for us locals, not just big firms, he says.

With crippling infrastructure and extreme traffic jams in Bengaluru, especially in areas where IT is booming, Krishna Kumar says the city must have IT corridors. "Traffic on ORR takes up 2-3 hours daily; we need dedicated IT corridors, flood-free areas, and affordable rentals which are now too high; it's Rs 50,000 for a 2BHK. The government must add cheap hostels, reliable buses and Metro, and 24/7 clean drinking water and zero power cuts. They must stop patchwork fixes for roads and create one body to manage Bengaluru properly," says Gowda.

He says the government should collaborate with companies for free training in AI/cloud for 10,000+ students yearly, like NIPUNA did for 4,000, guaranteeing jobs. Local colleges need real skills, not theory; tie-ups with companies like Infosys to bridge the 2lakh job gap so our youth don't migrate to other countries.

He seeks 30 per cent rebate on property tax, full power duty waiver, and internet bill cuts of up to Rs 12,000, plus rent help outside the core city. This will reduce living costs by 40 per cent in Bengaluru, encouraging families to stay and not flee to cheaper towns, he adds.

(From Karthik KK in Mysuru; Divya Cutinho in Mangaluru; Ramkrishna Badseshi in Kalaburagi; Mallikarjun Hiremath in Dharwad; Marx Tejaswi in Shivamogga; Tushar A Majukar in Belagavi and Rashmi Patil in Bengaluru)

Blaze in Chickpet exposes safety risks in city markets

GAYATHRI M KURUP @Bengaluru

CHICKPET, one of Bengaluru's oldest and busiest trading hubs, exposed critical fire safety gaps in Bengaluru's dense commercial zones. The blaze that gutted multiple textile and garment shops on Wednesday, underscores how narrow lanes, flammable stock and limited emergency access can turn a spark into a major disaster.

Surjyatapa Ray Choudhury, an urban development professional, noted that dense marketplaces are not considered in a separate safety category. "Many of these structures in historic market areas predate modern fire standards. Enforcement in newer buildings remains weak. The dense layouts with shared walls allow fires to spread rapidly," she said. She said the need for updated bylaws, fire-resilient construction materials, and improved emergency access planning tailored to commercial areas.

Fire safety concerns are compounded by everyday practices within such markets. Venkitachalam Anantharaman, Trustee of Beyond Carlton, said, "When flammable stock, like textiles and packaging materials, come in contact with unsafe electrical wiring, open flames, and overcrowding, the fire and damage multiplies."

He recommended practical, community-driven measures such as safe housekeeping, limiting overstocking, avoiding open flames, and installing shared firefighting systems such as hydrants and overhead water tanks. "What we must prioritise first is preventing loss of life, clear escape routes, shop-level fire extinguishers, and inspections can make difference," he said.

Busy commercial zones such as Commercial Street, Jayanagar 4th Block Market, and other traditional marketplaces across the city face similar vulnerabilities due to high footfall, mixed-use buildings, and limited emergency access. While some areas have wider roads and better planning, illegal parking, and overcrowding can hinder firefighting operations.

Markets like Chickpet have evolved organically and now operate at peak density. A large-scale redesign is difficult and potentially disruptive to livelihoods. Experts advocate targeted policy reforms, electrical safety audits, and trader-led safety practices. Without coordinated action from authorities, traders, and communities, Bengaluru's historic market districts may continue to face recurring fire hazards, experts opined.

East City Corporation staff took prompt action on Saturday after *TNIE* published a photograph of a garbage-filled footpath near the JC Nagar Post Office on February 26 | VINOD KUMAR T

NORTH CORPN BEGINS SPADEWORK WITH PLOGGING AND CLEANLINESS DRIVES

BENGALURU: A total of 35.65 tonnes of waste were cleared on Sunday through 42 plogging drives organised by Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC) with the support of 1,823 participants, including RWAs. The plogging was part of a mega cleanliness drive under Swachh Survekshan 2025-26. "To keep the city clean, beautiful and healthy, and create awareness among citizens about maintaining cleanliness in public places, a week-long 'Mega Cleanliness Drive for a Beautiful City' has been launched from March 1 across all seven divisions," said BNCC Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar. From Sunday, cleanliness works were carried out across all divisions, where roadside waste, silt, debris and tree branches were removed. Drain cleaning and comprehensive cleaning of vacant sites was also taken up. A total of 81 vacant sites were cleaned across Dasarahalli, Hebbal, Byatarayanapura, Sarvajnanagara, Pulikeshinagar, Rajarajeshwari Nagar and Yelahanka. Special emphasis has been laid on the elimination of Garbage Vulnerable Points, removal of black spots, beautification of public spaces, and environmental cleanliness. ENS

Horoscopes By Holiday

HOLIDAY MATHIS

02nd March : Bon Voyage Mars Mars raises the anchor, pulls away from the dock and begins a journey at sea with today's transit into Pisces. Action turns intuitive, guided less by force and more by feel. What if progress were more about listening than doing? What if we sensed currents and rode them? What if we gave in to the waves of imagination that are swelling all around us?

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
Through your gift for vivid fantasy, you feel what it's like to live in a world filled with all you value and aspire to, and you can really see it. When you touch back to reality, you use this as a compass.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 - May 20)
A little bit of research will show better options, but a lot of research may show you so much that it confuses the issue. Be strategic and to the point, limiting your inquiry process to a few hours.

GEMINI (May 21 - June 21)
Your natural mode is curiosity, and you love experimentation, so the unsolicited advice from those who seem to take joy in cautioning you against this and that can feel annoying. It might be more about their need for control than your safety.

CANCER (June 22 - July 22)
There are many kinds of justice to be served, including, notably, justice of the poetic variety. A quiet, satisfying ripple of irony washes over the moment. You'll be validated in some way, and the poetic symmetry of it all will be delicious.

LEO (July 23 - Aug. 22)
You're a giver. Even when you're receiving, you're giving. So how do you stay fortified? By rooting yourself where you'll flourish. Keep in mind that there are no universally correct environments. A cactus thrives in the desert, a vine in the jungle.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)
It's like the day keeps slipping you small gifts -- little surprises to remind you you're unique and essential to how it's all going. Life is collaborating with you and enjoying the collaboration.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 - Oct. 23)
You're hearing a lot today that either doesn't quite hit you the right way or doesn't quite ring true. When honest words aren't pleasing and pleasing words aren't honest, you'll take a step back and reassess more than just these sentences.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 21)
Love is as love does. Put stock in action. It's not that words matter less today; it's that they hardly matter at all because irrefutable truth is in how people treat one another, and the difference that makes.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)
Societal standards of beauty are ever-changing because beauty relies on freshness. Yes, fashions come back around, trends resurface, but it's never exactly the same twice. You'll love the version of a classic you knew well.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)
You're not sure what you're going to get in a relationship these days. But through the tension, tenderness, friction and fun, you're reminded that the long haul has many chapters and moods, and that's what makes it meaningful.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)
People with influence will be impressed with your confidence, ease, curiosity, discernment and how you listen and carry yourself. Don't talk shop too soon. It can flatten all your vibes into transactional relationshipa. Feel this out over time.

PISCES (Feb. 19 - Mar 20)
Seems like yesterday's solution is becoming today's problem, which only means the world is turning on its typical axis. Still, you'll have a joyful moment of appreciation for this unique set of less-than-ideal circumstances.

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle ⬇

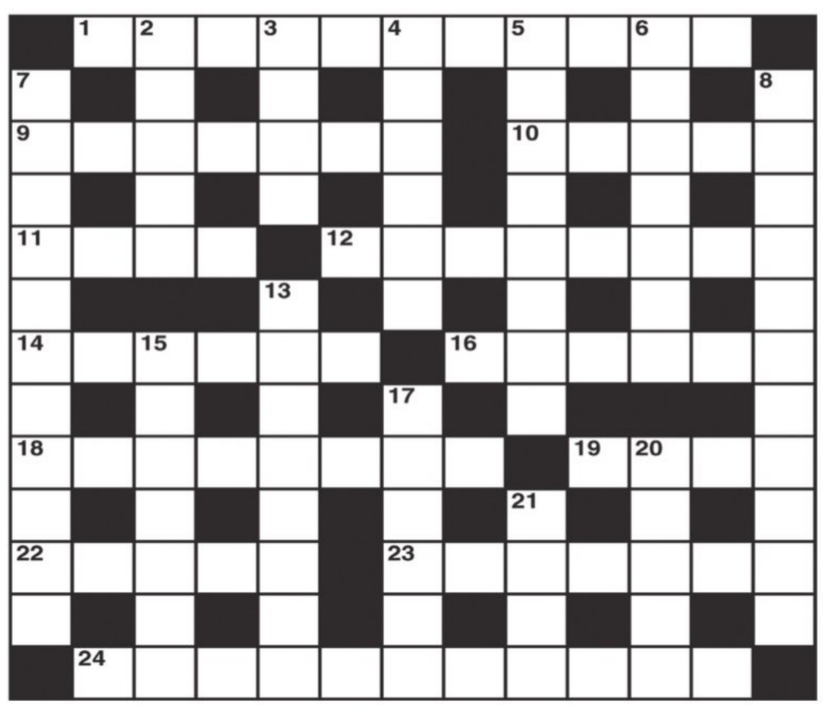
5				1	6			8
			4		9	3	2	6
6	4			7				
	6					8		1
	5		8	3	1		6	
2		1					3	
				4			7	9
1	9	2	6		7			
4			1	9				2

6	1	8	7	5	4	3	9	2
3	7	5	9	2	8	6	4	1
9	2	4	6	1	3	8	5	7
5	4	3	2	8	9	1	7	6
1	9	7	5	3	6	2	8	4
8	6	2	1	4	7	9	3	5
7	5	9	8	6	2	4	1	3
4	8	6	3	7	1	5	2	9
2	3	1	4	9	5	7	6	8

SUDOKU EASY

TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



CROSS WORD

ACROSS

1 He'll do! (3,2,6)
9 Perfectly good chaps but still on probation (7)
10 One big bird or two below par (5)
11 Sell damaged lengths of cloth (4)
12 Ragman upset by bill for brandy (8)
14 Spread out (6)
16 Be back in time for a serious discussion (6)
18 Patient having had to give up work (8)
19 But they could be even for the better (4)
22 Yet such a marriage won't end in the divorce court (5)
23 Free delivery (7)
24 A warning of some blow to come (5,6)

DOWN

2 It's hard hit when ironworkers strike (5)
3 Unrepeatable start of fairy story (4)
4 Maintain a lock up (6)
5 One who hasn't made a score in years (8)
6 Ron goes to Gaza in order to get material (7)
7 Irate, took food to excess (11)
8 Treat speech broadcast as a sign of bias in class (8,3)
13 Unusual for one (8)
15 He quibbles about suits after the bill goes up (7)
17 He has the skills to make a suit (6)
20 American lawyer without force or emotion (5)
21 Give a signal and slow down (4)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Pastit, 4 Act a part, 9 Ousted, 10 Emphatic, 12 Each, 13 Manor, 14 Free, 17 Dark thoughts, 20 Call to the bar, 23 Ural, 24 Stand, 25 Long, 28 Overseer, 29 Carmen, 30 Fortress, 31 Adults.

Down: 1 Proceeds, 2 Sash cord, 3 Item, 5 Common ground, 6 Ache, 7 Astern, 8 Ticket, 11 Man of letters, 15 Steak, 16 Itchy, 18 Abnormal, 19 Brigands, 21 Put off, 22 Career, 26 User, 27 Raid.

JUMBLE

UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.

BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

OJEYN

MUHTB

CBAEHL

RZAADH

I think it's time to start marketing to the east side of town.
ARBORTOWN
We'll need to open another location and hire more crew.
THE TREE-TRIMMING SERVICE WAS HIRING NEW EMPLOYEES IN ORDER TO ---
Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Facebook

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: _____ _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: FRONT STUNT TAVERN DECEIT
Answer: The oceanographers studied the flow of the ocean to keep up with — CURRENT EVENTS

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS GROUP

IDEAS • INNOVATION • INSIGHTS

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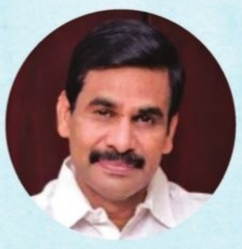

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JYOTIN KUTTY SASTABHAVAN
CHIEF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER, TATA MOTORS

K ANNAMALAI
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State BJP president BY Vijayendra on Sunday said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah came to power by attracting Ahinda votes, but today, he is letting them down, as he is only bothered about his survival in power. "Thousands of youths staged a massive protest in Dharwad, demanding the filling up of vacancies in government departments, but the CM used the police force to cane them, he said

Farmers disheartened as completion date pushed further to 2027 • Ballooning project cost makes completion of inter-basin water transfer initiative a tall order

Farmers await completion of Mallabad Irrigation Scheme

HANGING FIRE PART-V

RAMAKRISHNA BADSESHI
@Kalaburagi

THE demand for a lift irrigation project catering to the needs of farmers in the undivided taluk of Jewargi and Shahapur dates back to the 1990s.

The farmers began protesting for a lift irrigation project in Mallabad when JH Patel was chief minister. The agitation gained momentum in 2005-06 under JDS leader Kedara Lingaiah Hiremath when N Dharam Singh, who represented the Jewargi Assembly constituency, was chief minister. The protests also saw the participation of pontiffs of various mutts.

Although Dharam Singh approved the project in 2006, work started only in 2012. Considering the slow progress of the project, hundreds of farmers, under the banner of "Jewargi-Yadrami Taluk Raita Horata Samithi", blocked the National Highway 150 by parking bullock carts at Chigaralli Cross in December 2024.

The state government has sanctioned Rs 359 crore for the Mallabad Lift Irrigation Scheme Phases 1, 2 and 3 (to complete pending works, including distributing canals for Lifts 1, 2, and 3. Primary canal work is complete, with the construction going on for distribution channels). The revised estimate is Rs 578.27 crore and till March 2025, Rs 281.48 crore had been spent.

The Mallabad Lift Irrigation Scheme includes three lift points at Balbatti, Jamkhandi and Nagnur | EXPRESS

Under the Upper Krishna Project (UKP) Stage-3, the Mallabad scheme is one of the major projects that will irrigate 33,860 hectares (over 83,000 acres) of farm land across 68 villages of Jewargi, Yadrami of Kalaburagi district and Shahapur of Yadgir district. As of now, 7,144 hectares have been irrigated, while the remaining 26,716 hectares will be covered once the project is completed.

The project involves three main lift points at Balbatti, Jamkhandi and Nagnur and is designed to lift water from the Jewargi Branch Canal (JBC), a part of the Upper Krishna Project. This project is crucial for transforming the agricultural landscape of the region, providing necessary water and improving the economic stability of local farmers.

The total canal network is 513.94 km, of which 128.44 km has been completed. First, second and third phases of headwork, installing motors, electrification work and main channel work have been completed. The project is likely to be completed by September 2027, sources said.

YETTINAHOLE DRINKING WATER PROJECT DELAYED OVER ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE

BR UDAYA KUMAR @ Hassan

The Yettinahole Integrated Drinking Water Supply Project, an inter-basin water transfer initiative, is stuck because of lack of environmental clearance and alleged fund crunch.

The first phase of the project was launched by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar near Hebbabahalli in Sakleshpur on September 6, 2024. The project is now delayed due to lack of forest clearance for a 7km-long canal near Halebid in Hassan district.

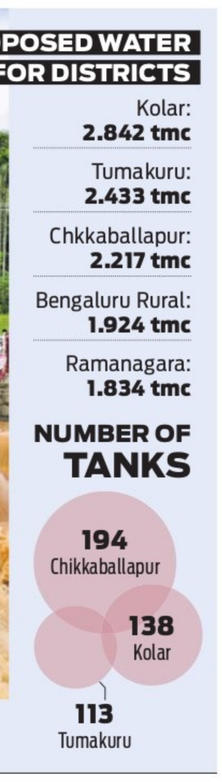
The project cost has now ballooned to Rs 23,251 crore from an initial estimate of 12,912.36 crore after getting revised four times so far.

The project is aimed at mitigating drinking water scarcity in 6,657 villages and 38 towns of seven drought-prone districts, including Hassan, Tumakuru, Chitradurga, Kolar, Chikkaballapur, Ramanagar and Bengaluru Rural.

The project aims to divert floodwaters amounting to 24.1 tmcft from the Western Ghats through Kadumanehole, Kirehole, Yettinahole and Hongadahalla, all tributaries of the Netravathi.

The project has two stages. Lifting and construction of weirs and storage tanks in the first stage, and the construction of the distribution canal and balancing reservoirs in the second stage.

According to officials, over 80 percent of gravity main canal work and 97 percent of feeders have been completed. As per the project report, water will be pumped from eight weirs up to 34 km from where water will reach Lakkehahalli in Tumakuru with a distance of 260 km through gravitation.



The Yettinahole drinking water project aims to divert 24.1 tmcft of floodwaters from the Western Ghats

The construction of eight weirs and nine pump houses has been completed. A trial run was conducted up to 34 km in the first phase. The water yield is 18 tmcft with a shortfall of 6 tmcft

—Venkatesh, executive engineer

The project was met with resistance by environmentalists for its alleged impact on biodiversity and threat of increasing landslides. Locals are against land acquisition in Koratagere in Tumakuru district.

According to Venkatesh, executive engineer, the construction of eight weirs and nine pump houses has been completed. A trial run was conducted up to 34 km in the first phase.

Recent reports say water yield is 18 tmcft with a shortfall of 6 tmcft. There is a debate over the availability of water and many have expressed doubt about lifting 24 tmcft even during monsoon.

But the government is still confident of diverting 24 tmcft of water as per the DPR. The government is now making diversion strategies to meet the target, sources said.

HP Mohan, a prominent coffee grower and former district forest warden in Hemmige, said the project cost has doubled in a decade.

Umesh, a green activist, said man-animal conflicts have increased in the wake of the Yettinahole project.

Brushing aside the naysayers, the DCM says the state is committed to dedicate the project by March 2027.

Madhu flies out PKs to Bengaluru to celebrate b'day

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru/Shivamogga

IN a gesture that's getting attention across Karnataka, Primary Education Minister **Madhu Bangarappa** marked his 60th birthday not with grand celebrations, but by flying out 96 pourakarmikas to Bengaluru, on their first-ever airplane journey.

It was a two-day celebration. On Sunday, 36 workers from Soraba Town Municipality boarded a 65-minute flight from Shivamogga to Bengaluru.

On Monday, another group of 60 from Anavatti Town Panchayat is set to follow, with the minister himself accompanying them. A third group of 59 workers will arrive by train early Monday, ahead of a joint cake-cutting celebration in the capital. The first group will stay in Bengaluru and join in the birthday celebrations.

Flight tickets, costing between Rs 2,300 and Rs 2,500 each, were arranged in advance by the minister's team.

Organisers said every pourakarmika from the selected municipalities was included. It was the minister's gift to civic sanitation workers who keep towns in running condition.

At Shivamogga airport, the atmosphere was filled with excitement and emotion. Nervous laughter, teary eyes and radiant smiles marked a rare moment of recognition for the workers, all from Scheduled Caste communities, whose daily routine involves sweeping streets and keeping footpaths clean.

BJP will win 140-150 seats, form govt in '28: BSY

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Davanagere

FORMER Chief Minister **BS Yediyurappa** on Saturday said the BJP will form the next government in the state with a simple majority, and the people of Karnataka are waiting for the opportunity to root-out Congress from power.

Addressing the public during the birthday celebration of former minister MP Renukacharya at Honnali, Yediyurappa said the BJP will rewrite the history in 2028 elections and he will work wholeheartedly to bring the party to power with an absolute majority. He said he was sure that the BJP would win 140–150 seats in the state. "The voters who are disillusioned with the Congress administration have made-up their mind to vote for the BJP," he said.

Taking note of the importance of the leaders who have distanced themselves from the BJP, he stressed the need of bringing them back to the party fold. "Unitedly, the BJP can't be defeated. We have to shed the differences, and our ultimate goal should be to bring the party back to power in Karnataka," he said.

"Due to unavoidable circumstances and the guarantees promised by the Congress, the voters gave them a decisive mandate, and our leaders like MP Renukacharya, Madal Virupakshappa, SV Ramachandra, Basavaraja Naik and Sampangi lost the elections. The differences it caused should be effectively addressed, and these leaders should be victorious in 2028 elections from their respective constituencies," Yediyurappa said.

Seeking more seats when we are in an alliance is the right of the JDS, however, the BJP high command will take the final call. Our aim is to ensure the NDA wins in all eight constituencies of the district

Gurulingappa Angadi, BJP district president, Vijayapura

BJP plans rally in May to revive BSY magic

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

THE BJP, which had unceremoniously removed BS Yediyurappa from the CM's post in July 2021, and paid the price for it in the 2023 Assembly polls, is planning to bring the Veerashaiva Lingayat strongman back into the limelight.

The party is organising a big-ticket rally in the first week of May in Chitradurga. Union Home Minister Amit Shah is likely to take part in the event, an initiative taken up by Yediyurappa's son and BJP state president BY Vijayendra, according to sources. The event will mark 50 years of Yediyurappa's political career. There is a plan to rope in Central leaders and heads of religious institutions, and mobilise not less than five lakh people from across the state.

Senior leader Prabhakar Kore has been appointed reception committee chief, with Chitradurga MP Govind Karjol as honorary president and former minister B Sriramulu as working president.

The BJP hopes to capitalise on BSY's mass appeal once again to polarise the Veerashaiva Lingayat community votes ahead of upcoming elections. Yediyurappa is also keen to actively participate in the party's organisation as son Vijayendra is a contender for the CM's post if the party comes to power. With anti-incumbency ripples against the Congress government, and the tussle between Siddaramaiaah and DK Shivakumar continuing, the BJP feels Yediyurappa's entry as an effective 'opposition leader' outside the Assembly will pay rich dividends, say political analysts.

SHARING THE JOY

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah attends the wedding celebrations of Tarikere MLA GH Srinivas' son, organised in Bengaluru, on Sunday | EXPRESS

Siddu using state intel to keep tabs on DCM camp

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru:

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah, who is growing apprehensive about Deputy CM **DK Shivakumar**'s camp trying to garner the support of more MLAs to give an impression that their numbers are increasing, appears to have decided to use the state's intelligence machinery to keep tabs on them.

After the DKS camp gathered for dinner at a hotel on the eve of Magadi MLA HC Balakrishna's birthday, Siddaramaiah has sought minutest details about the movements of the legislators, sources said. Now the state intelligence department, which is under the CM's control, has been asked to give him more updates every day than the routine briefing, they said.

The DKS camp had indirectly claimed that around 40 MLAs joined the dinner. However, only 32 of the 69 MLAs they had invited to the dinner turned up. The faction had also sent feelers that they would meet the Congress high command in Delhi after the budget session.

Some of the MLAs, who were neutral to both camps, told TNIE that they were in favour of a change of guard, but wished that the party high command took a decision that would neither dent the party's image, nor adversely impact its prospects in 2028 Assembly polls.

Sources said Shivakumar's fate even upon becoming CM, will depend on the legal opinion the AICC has been seeking with regard to some pending cases against him, including a disproportionate assets case which Supreme Court lawyer Kapil Sibal is handling. Fearing that the BJP would harp on it, the Congress high command is likely to make a cautious move. The SC dismissed the 2018 money laundering case against him in March, 2024, which boosted the morale of the Shivakumar camp.

Unease in Vijayapura dist BJP over seat-sharing

FIROZ ROZINDAR @ Vijayapura

CLEAR indications from the JDS about a possible pre-poll alliance with the BJP for the 2028 Assembly elections have stirred up unease within the saffron party's district unit, particularly among ticket aspirants.

The developments followed the JDS' Kittur Karnataka regional convention in Vijayapura on February 27, held as part of party's silver jubilee celebrations, where the leadership signalled its electoral ambitions in four Assembly constituencies of Vijayapura district.

The anxiety in BJP circles comes after Union Minister and JDS leader HD Kumaraswamy and party patriarch HD Deve Gowda publicly endorsed prospective candidates for Nagathan, Indi, Devarahipparagi and Basavanabagewadi Assembly segments. Their gestures were widely interpreted as a formal claim over these constituencies in the event of a seat-sharing arrangement with the BJP.

Among the four, Devarahipparagi is currently represented by JDS MLA Rajugouda Patil, strengthening the party's claim there. In the other three constituencies, the projected faces are former candidates who had earlier lost to the Congress but continue to maintain grassroots networks. They include Appugouda Managuli from Basavanabagewadi, Devanand Chavan from Nagathan and BD Patil from Indi. By backing both winning and defeated candidates on a single platform, the JDS leadership sought to project organisational readiness ahead of the next polls.

Political observers are of the view that this assertive move has created heartburn among BJP leaders who have nurtured ambitions to contest from these segments. Many local aspirants fear that if an alliance materialises, and JDS insists on contesting all four seats, their prospects could be sacrificed, and they may lose political ground built over years, said one of them.

Asked about his reaction, BJP district president Gurulingappa Angadi said, "Seeking more seats in alliance is the right of the JDS, however, the BJP high command will take the final call. Our aim is to ensure the NDA wins in all eight constituencies of the district."

WORK BEGINS ON TWO NEW UNITS AT KAIGA NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

SUBHASH CHANDRA NS
@ Kaiga (Uttara Kannada)

AMIDST the promise of Atma Nirbhar Bharah (Make in India) and indigenisation of nuclear energy production, the Kaiga Nuclear Power Corporation Limited in Uttara Kannada on Sunday took a big leap by kickstarting the construction of the plant's units 5 and 6. The project construction began with the first concrete pour for the reactors.

The Make in India initiative, which has covered defence and several other sectors, has now covered the atomic energy sector, too. The reactors for Kaiga's units 5 and 6 will have indigenous reactors.

"The pressurised heavy water reactors of 700MW have been completely developed under the Make in India initiative," said B Vinod Kumar, the site director of the Kaiga nuclear plant.

Kumar said the Union government had approved 10 facts on fleet mode, of which the 700MW reactors were developed for Gujarat, Rajasthan and Karnataka. This is the first time indigenous reactors are being deployed," he said.

The construction work of Kaiga Nuclear Power Corporation's units 5 and 6 were launched by the first concrete pour for the reactors on Sunday | EXPRESS

"Under the old agreement, the state would get 20% of the energy generated here, but the new scheme allows for 50% state share," he said.

Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) Chairman Ajit Kumar Mohanty and the secretary, of the department of atomic energy (DAE) inaugurated the work by offering special puja, along with Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) Bhuan Chandra Pathak.

Mohanty said the work is aimed at achieving the critical within 60 months. "But you should aim for and ensure that it is in full operational mode within 60 months," he said.

At present Kaiga power plant has an installed capacity of 880MW and will be extended to 2,280MW once the units 5 and 6 are fully operational.

NPCIL ready to add another 7,000MW capacity

Kaiga: If everything goes as planned, the state might get another mega nuclear power project, with the Nuclear Power Corporation India Limited (NPCIL) expressing its willingness to increase generation capacity by another 7,000MW in Karnataka. Bhuvan Chandra Pathak, the NPCIL CMD, said, "We have a target to increase the capacity. We will ensure that more nuclear power plants come up," he said.

Kundapur Rural Police Station Sub-Inspector Nasir Hussain collapsed and died while participating in the 5 km 'Karnataka Police Run' event held in Udupi on Sunday morning. The event was organised under the theme 'Our Police, Our Pride' to promote physical fitness, a drug-free Karnataka, and cyber awareness

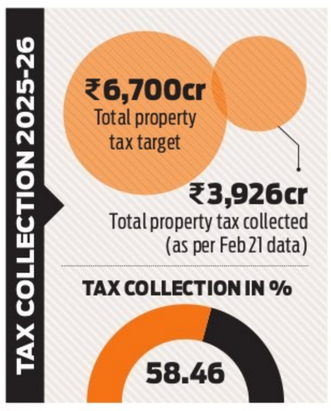
GBA MOPS UP ONLY 60% OF PROPERTY TAX TARGET

Collection at ₹3.9K cr, auctions don't help before March 31 deadline

AKNISREE KARTHIK @ Bengaluru

WITH only 30 days left for the end of the financial year, Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has collected just around 60 per cent of the property tax target. Of the set target of Rs 6,700crore for 2025-2026, GBA has collected only Rs 3,926crore. Compared to the same time last year, the civic body had collected Rs 4,537 crore. With the deadline fast approaching, each of the five corporations has been assigned weekly targets to mop up taxes.

Among the five corporations, Bengaluru East City Corporation (BECC) has the highest target with Rs 1,673 crore, but BECC has managed to collect only Rs 1,017crore as of February 21, according to available data. "To meet the target, BECC has been given a target to collect over Rs 100 crore every week before March 31," said a GBA official. He said only BECC's property tax collection has crossed Rs 1,000 crore, while the remaining four are nowhere near it. This is despite the GBA resorting to auctioning properties in the city to recover long-pending tax dues.



Bengaluru North City Corporation's (BNCC) target is Rs 1,242 crore, and it has collected Rs 656 crore. Bengaluru Central City Corporation's target is Rs 1,273 crore, while collection is Rs 729 crore. Bengaluru South City Corporation has collected Rs 755 crore of its total target of Rs 1,228 crore, and Bengaluru West City Corporation has collected Rs 768 crore of its target of Rs 1,281 crore, the data revealed.

The official said that usually, property tax collection picks up pace in February and March as the deadline nears, to avoid penalties. "In 2023-2024, under the erstwhile BBMP, Rs 3,918crore was collected. In 2024-2025, the total property tax collection was Rs 4,930crore, which set a new record. We are hoping collection will see a jump in March," the official said.

Due to the fear of losing their properties to auction, property owners will rush to clear their dues, the official said. Responding to criticism that GBA is targeting only small property owners by auctioning their properties, the official said that irrespective of property size and value, all defaulters have to cough up dues, else they will lose their properties through auction.

GAFX 2026 CONCLUDES

Nipuna to back large-scale re-skilling: Priyank

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

BENGALURU GAFX 2026 concluded on Sunday with a turnout of over 10,000 visitors, more than 50 exhibitors and solution providers, and wide participation from students, studios and investors, reflecting the expanding scale of India's Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics, and Extended Reality (AVGC-XR) ecosystem.

The three-day summit hosted over 200 speakers from India and 10 countries with nearly 100 sessions, 300 curated B2B meetings and 35 investor pitches connecting startups with global investors. 20 intellectual properties were launched, including ten from Karnataka.

IT & BT Minister Priyank Kharge and Minister for Higher Education Dr M C Sudhakar at the Bengaluru GAFX 2026 valedictory event in Bengaluru on Sunday | EXPRESS

At the valedictory session, IT & BT Minister Priyank Kharge said artificial intelligence is transforming animation, gaming and visual effects production by reducing timelines and reshaping creative workflows. He announced measures under the Nipuna programme to support large-scale reskilling with government assistance, plans for a Responsible Use of AI Committee. He highlighted efforts to strengthen IP protection and expand global market access.

Higher Education Minister M. C. Sudhakar outlined apprenticeship-embedded degree programmes that place students in workplaces by the fifth semester, with stipends in sectors such as retail, e-commerce and logistics, aimed at producing job-ready graduates.

The summit witnessed the signing of an MoU between the Indian Institute of Creative Technologies and ABAI to strengthen collaboration in curriculum development, incubation and research. KalaVerse, a cultural pavilion integrating Yakshagana and Janapada art into animation and gaming pipelines, and expanded investor engagement platforms were among other highlights. The next edition will be held from January 29 to 31, 2027.

Social media influences behaviour: Docs

ANSHUMAN U SHASTRY
@Bengaluru

NOT SO SOCIAL

RECKLESS driving and dangerous stunt videos uploaded on social media are increasingly shaping how young people perceive risk and recognition. As such clips go viral, garnering thousands of views, likes and shares, the trend is quietly scripting a dangerous blueprint for the next generation. Experts opine that as these videos normalise aggression, algorithms reward outrage with attention and warn about the lack of digital scrutiny.

Speaking to TNIE about the influence of social media on aggressive behaviour on road, Dr Arun Kumar, senior consultant psychiatrist at Cadabams Hospitals, said, "Content triggering emotions like anger, shock or fear spreads faster as it captures attention instantly. Social media algorithms amplify content that generates engagement. This loop makes aggressive behaviour more visible, though most people continue to behave responsibly in public spaces."

Dr Megha Shankar, Clinical Psychologist at Mindew Healthcare, said, "When clips of aggression or rage go viral on social media, the views and shares can be seen as a reward to their behaviour. It triggers validation rather than shame for criticism. Kids and teens exposed to social media without guidance or scrutiny from elders subconsciously mimic actions that appear rewarding. Social media can indirectly encourage public outrage and aggressive behaviour as it attracts attention."

People performing risky stunts driving on the wrong side usually react aggressively when confronted. "When risk taking is associated with identity or social approval, the questioning is perceived as an attack. The aggressive response often comes from defensiveness, embarrassment, or fear of losing presumed social status," said Kumar. In many cases, anger becomes a protective reaction rather than the primary intention.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic-South) Gopal M Byakod said, "The youth are risking their life trying to create videos for social media. Though 99% of drivers are responsible, the existing problem cannot be ignored," He said there is a need for an awareness drive to educate not just the youth but also the parents to prevent their children from committing offences. "We cannot regulate social media, but we can educate people in being responsible," he said.

Understanding the impulsivity, sensation seeking and performative behaviour shaped by digital culture, Megha suggested, "We must stop glorifying such behaviour online. The posts must be attached with a legal note from the authorities that can educate the viewers. The children must be caught in an influential age, and taught social responsibility and consequences otherwise."

Rajajinagar team honoured for 95% garbage segregation

BENGALURU: As the Rajajinagar Assembly constituency has achieved over 95% garbage segregation, local MLA Suresh Kumar met Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) CEO Kareegowda and his team and honoured them on Sunday. The constituency, which has seven GBA wards, was initially clocking only 61% waste segregation. Now, 14 compactors, 137 auto-tippers, 274 drivers/helpers, and 347 pourakarmikas have been deployed. "All officers and staff of BSWML deserve kudos. By working as a team and creating an awareness among citizens, an extraordinary achievement was accomplished in the constituency. Securing the first position in the GBA jurisdiction is a matter of pride. Thanks to all the citizens who cooperated," Kumar said.

SIRC B'luru announces 2026-27 team

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

THE Bengaluru branch of the Southern India Regional Council (SIRC) of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) announced its newly elected office bearers and managing committee members for 2026-2027. The newly constituted team includes Chartered Accountants(CA) Kavitha Paramesh as Chairperson, Tuppad Virupakshappa Muppanna as Vice-Chairman, Narayan Shripad Hulgol as Secretary and Nischal Reniguntla Badarinath as Treasurer.

Chairperson Kavitha outlined a progressive roadmap focusing on inspiring budding commerce students to pursue CA as a career through awareness, engagement initiatives, and expanding academic support systems. Kavitha emphasized empowering women in CA and fostering inclusive leadership. She also proposed leading a professional delegation to the United Kingdom and Dubai to study global best practices in CA.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah hands over Rs 15 lakh compensation to the grieving parents of 15-year-old Sanketh in Shivamogga on Sunday | EXPRESS

CM HANDS OVER ₹15L CHEQUE TO PARENTS OF SLAIN BOY

Shivamogga: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday consoled the grieving parents of 15-year-old Sanketh, allegedly murdered by a group of minors following a dispute during a cricket match at Sulebailu recently. As a mark of financial support to the victim's parents, Rs 10 lakh was released from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund and Rs 5 lakh from the School Education Department. The incident reportedly stemmed from a quarrel during a local cricket match that escalated into violence. Sanketh, who tried to intervene in the clash between his friend and the group of minors, was beaten to death. **ENS**

EXPRESS READ

3 held in Home Guard bribe racket

Kolar: A Home Guard Inspector, a serving Home Guard and a retired Home Guard were arrested by Lokayukta sleuths on charges of allegedly collecting bribes for deputing Home Guards to police stations. Home Guard Murali lodged a complaint alleging that he was demanded money for deputation to Kamasamudram police station. The Lokayukta arrested Manjunath while taking Rs 1,000. Leads from him led to the arrest of the other two persons. **ENS**

TENDER NOTICE

EMRI Green Health Services in line with PPP agreement with Government of Tamil Nadu invites bids from all reputed Manufacturer/their Authorized dealers for Supply of Maintenance of GPS (Global Position Systems) and Supply of Tyres and Battery. The Tender documents can be downloaded from website www.tender.tn.gov.in / www.emri.in. For more details, please contact Mr. Prakash.S, Mobile No: 7550018108

Any amendments/notices further will not be published in newspaper.

DIPR/1469/TENDER/2026

STATEMENT ABOUT OWNERSHIP AND OTHER PARTICULARS OF THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS, BENGALURU AS REQUIRED UNDER RULE 8 OF THE REGISTRATION OF NEWSPAPERS (CENTRAL) RULES, 1956.

FORM IV

(See Rule 8)

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I, N. GOPALAN hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

N. GOPALAN
PUBLISHER

Date: 01.03.2026

DEMAND NOTICE

Whereas the Authorized Officer of Asset Reconstruction Company (India) Limited (acting in capacity as Trustee for the below mentioned Trusts) (hereinafter referred to as "ARCIL") is incorporated under the companies Act, 1956 and registered as an Asset Reconstruction Company with the Reserve Bank of India of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial assets and Enforcement of security interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as "the SARFAESI Act") and whereas the Borrower / Co-Borrowers as mentioned in Column No. 2 of the below mentioned chart obtained loan from **IIFL-Home Finance Ltd.,** the Original Lenders and whereas ARCIL has acquired the financial assets relating to the loan accounts mentioned herein below and whereas ARCIL being the secured creditor under the SARFAESI Act, and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 2 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued demand notice calling upon the Borrowers / Co-Borrowers as mentioned herein below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notices with further interest thereon within 60 days from the date of notice, but the notices could not be served upon some of them for various reasons.
Name of Trust: **Arcil - Trust -2026 - 015**

Name of Borrower's / Co-Borrower Name's/ Guarantor's/ LAN No.'s	Demand Notice Date & Amount	Description of the Property
Mr. Ravindra Kumar Mrs. Shobha H **Prospect No. 944797, IL10025806**	**13/01/2026, 944797 is ₹383708.86/-** (Rupees Three Lakh Eighty Three Thousand Seven Hundred Eight and Eighty Six Paise Only) **& IL10025806 is ₹1615092.19/-**(Rupees Sixteen Lakh Fifteen Thousand Ninety Two and Nineteen Paise Only)	All That Piece And Parcel Of Flat No A002 Ground Floor Tower 15 Janaadhar Phase, M Midehalli Attibele Hobli, Attibele Hobli Anekal Taluk Bangalore, Bangalore, Karnataka, India, 560100 Area Admeasuring (in Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Super_built_up_area Property Area: 656 Bounded By: North: As Per The Title Documents And Technical Reports South: As Per The Title Documents And Technical Reports East: As Per The Title Documents And Technical Reports West: As Per The Title Documents And Technical Reports
Mr. C Murugeshan, P R C Traders, Mr. Murali C, Mr. R Cheluva Raju, Mrs. C Rani, Mrs. M Shilpakala, **Prospect No. 980525, 929464, 927079**	**13/01/2026, 927079 is ₹2093011.29/-** (Rupees Twenty Lakh Ninety Three Thousand Eleven and Twenty Nine Paise Only) **& 929464 is ₹930554.98/-** (Rupees Nine Lakh Thirty Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Four and Ninety Eight Paise Only) **& 980525 is ₹393624.56/-**(Rupees Three Lakh Ninety Three Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Four and Fifty Six Paise Only)	All That Piece And Parcel Of Site No. 6, Northern Portion, In Survey No. 11/3, Madiwala, Ward No. 65, Bangalore, Karnataka 560068 Area Admeasuring (in Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Land_area, Built_up_area Property Area: 516.00, 510.00 Bounded By: North: Road South: No 6 11 3 East: Passage And Then West: Private Property
Mrs. Lakshmidevi Bhagivalu Timmegowda, S L V Garments, Mr. Gonjevu Mudala Girigowda Manje Gowda, **Prospect No. IL10239163, IL10448060**	**13/01/2026, IL10239163 is ₹5255522.37/-** (Rupees Fifty Two Lakh Fifty Five Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Two and Thirty Seven Paise Only) **& IL10448060 is ₹522280.36/-**(Rupees Five Lakh Twenty Two Thousand Two Hundred Eighty and Thirty Six Paise Only)	All That Piece And Parcel Of site no 98, assessment no 55, khatha no 65, situated at ward no 40, Kariwobanahalli village, yeshwanthpur Hobli, Bangalore North Tq, Karnataka 560058 Area Admeasuring (in Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Land_area, Built_up_area Property Area: 1160.00, 2030.00 Bounded By: North: Residential House South: Mixed Property East: 20 Feet Mud Road West: Private Property
Mr. Reddy Purushothamma, Manjunatha Enterprises, Mrs. Subramanya Reddy Roopa, Mr. Mohan Veeraswamy, **Prospect No. IL10388366, IL10609717**	**13/01/2026, IL10388366 is ₹3008818.83/-** (Rupees Thirty Lakh Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Eighteen and Eighty Three Paise Only) **& IL10609717 is ₹3107234.17/-** (Rupees Thirty One Lakh Seven Thousand Two Hundred Thirty Four and Seventeen Paise Only)	All That Piece And Parcel Of **Property No.1-** Property no.23, Katha no.4, situated at Subramanyapura Village, Uttrahalli Hobili, Bangalore South tq, Karnataka 560061 Area Admeasuring (in Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Land_area Property Area: 1200 Bounded By: North: Residential House South: Residential House No 24 East: 20 Feet Road West: Residential House **Property No.2-** Property Bearing Property No. 415/1, Old No. 242 (A), Assessment No. 5, PID No. 59-48 415/1, Ward No. 167, Situated At Shastrinagar, Bangalore, Karnataka. 560004 Area Admeasuring (in Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Land_area, Built_up_area Property Area: 450.00, 787.50 Bounded By:North: 20 Feet Road South: Residential House East: Residential House West: Residential House
Mrs. Anuradha, Anuradha Homes, Mrs. Deepika, **Prospect No. IL10455594, IL10610856**	**13/01/2026, IL10455594 is ₹1365562.81/-** (Rupees Thirteen Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Two and Eighty One Paise Only) **& IL10610856 is ₹319681.07/-**(Rupees Three Lakh Nineteen Thousand Six Hundred Eighty One and Seven Paisa Only)	All That Piece And Parcel Of Sy. No. 29, Site No. 92 Khata No. 29/92, Bangalore South, Begur Hobli Kodichikkanahalli Village, Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore, Bangalore, Karnataka, India, 560076 Area Admeasuring (in Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Land_area, Built_up_area Property Area: 1200.00, 840.00 Bounded By: North: Sheet House South: Road East: Sheet House West: Vacant Site
Mr. Shrikanth Siddayya, Mr. Siddayya Shrikanth, Miss. Lakshmi, Mrs. Shrikanth Lakshmi, **Prospect No. 987733, IL10593569**	**13/01/2026, 987733 is ₹595269.27/-** (Rupees Five Lakh Ninety Five Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Nine and Twenty Seven Paise Only) **& IL10593569 is ₹4935766.05/-** (Rupees Forty Nine Lakh Thirty Five Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Six and Five Paisa Only)	All That Piece And Parcel Of 403, Wing A3 4th Floor, VBHC Palmhaven Block A, Kengeri, Bangalore Rural, Karnataka, India 560060 Area Admeasuring (in Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Carpet Area Property Area: 588 Bounded By: North: As Per The Title Documents And Technical Reports South: As Per The Title Documents And Technical Reports East: As Per The Title Documents And Technical Reports West: As Per The Title Documents And Technical Reports
Mr. John Baptist G, Mrs. Mary Shylaja U **Prospect No. 786457, 943255**	**13/01/2026, 786457 is ₹ 2986042.54/-** (Rupees Twenty Nine Lakh Eighty Six Thousand Forty Two and Fifty Four Paise Only) **& 943255 ₹ 196740.90/-** (Rupees One Lakh Ninety Six Thousand Seven Hundred Forty and Ninety Paise Only)	All that piece and parcel of the house Property bearing Site No.32, khatha No.128/31-32, situated at Thanisandra Village, K.R.Puram Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk Bangalore now this property comes under the Jurisdiction of BBMP Bangalore 560045 . Area Admeasuring (in Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Land_area, Built_up_area Property Area: 750.00, 1204.00, Bounded By: North: Private Property South: Road , East: Private Property(not Numbered), West: Private Property(Not Numbered)

Notice, is therefore given to the Borrowers / Co-Borrowers, as mentioned herein above, calling upon them to make payment of the total outstanding amount as shown herein above, against the respective Borrower / Co-Borrower, within 60 days of publication of this notice. Failure to make payment of the total outstanding amount together with further interest by the respective Borrower/ Co-Borrower, ARCIL shall be constrained to take u/s 13(4) for enforcement of security interest upon properties as described above, steps are also being taken for service of notice in other manners as prescribed under the Act and the rules made hereunder. You are put to notice that the said mortgage can be redeemed upon payment of the entire amount due together with costs, charges and expenses incurred by Arcil at any time before the date of publication of notice for public auction or private treaty for transfer by way of sale, as detailed in Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act.
Take note that in terms of S- 13 (13) of the SARFAESI Act, you are hereby restrained from transferring and/or dealing with the Secured Properties in any manner by way of sale, lease or in any other manner

Place : Bangalore
Date : 02.03.2026

Sd/- Authorised Officer
Asset Reconstruction Company (India) Ltd. (In capacity as Trustee)

ASSET RECONSTRUCTION COMPANY (INDIA) LTD.
CIN No.-U65999MH2002PLC134884 | Website: www.arcil.co.in
Registered Office: The Ruby, 10th Floor, 29 Senapati Bapat Marg, Dadar (West), Mumbai-400028. Tel: +91 2266581300.

E-TENDER NOTICE

MAHAGENCO Maharashtra State Power Generation Co. Ltd.

E-Tender is invited online from experienced and reputed manufacturers/suppliers/contractor for the supply/works of following at IT section, Dharavi, Mumbai.

Sr. No.	Tender No./ Rfx no.	Description	Estimated Cost	EMD (Rs.)	Sale Period	Last date of Submission
1	**3000066370**	Procurement and implementation of an Integrated Security Solution for IT Perimeter Protection	27.37 Cr	27,36,520/-	02.03.2026 at 11.00 hrs To 22.03.2026 at 15.00 hrs	23.03.2026 at 15.00 hrs
Contact Person		Office of the Executive Director (IT) PHONE (O) : 022-69425000 Email- edit@mahagenco.in				

Tender cost is Rs.1180/- . Tender cost and EMD to be paid online only. Tenders are available for sell on our website from date 02.03.2026 at 11.00 hrs.
Vendors are requested to register their firm for E-Tendering . Please log on to our website https://eprocurement.mahagenco.in/

Sd/ -
Executive Director (IT)

UTTAR PRADESH NEW & RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (UPNEDA)
(Deptt. of Additional Sources of Energy, Govt. of U.P.)
Vibhuti Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-226010,
Tel.No. 0522-2720652, 2720779, 2720829
Website: www.upneda.org.in, Email: compneda@rediffmail.com

Opportunity for Investors & Project Developers for setting up Floating Solar Projects

Uttar Pradesh New and Renewable Energy Development Agency (UPNEDA) invites Online Applications from Investors/Project Developers for allotment of identified Dams/Reservoirs for setting up Floating Solar Projects.

Key Information for the Application is as follows:		
A.	Dam/Reservoir lease charges for public sector (PSU)	Rs. 1 /Acre/year
B.	Dam/Reservoir lease charges for private sector and JVs	Rs. 15000/Acre/year
C.	Link for Standard Operating Procedure (S.O.P) and Govt. order No. 372/87 dated 14.03.2024	https://solar.upneda.in, https://www.upneda.org.in/
D.	Application invited on Portal	https://solar.upneda.in, https://www.upneda.org.in/ Portal is Live for online application
E.	Online Registration Fee	Rs. 23600.00 (Including Taxes)

Detailed application & proposals will be evaluated on '**First Come First Serve**' basis according to the standard Operating Procedure (S.O.P) dated 28.03.2025 and Govt. order No.372/87 dated 14.03.2024

Note: All applications submitted till the last day of each month will be considered as one group. Evaluation will be done on a monthly basis.

Nodal officer Details: Sh. Narendra Singh, Senior Project Officer-II, 94156 09007

Director, UPNEDA

SAVE ELECTRICITY FOR YOUR BETTER TOMORROW

IF YOU'RE GOING THROUGH HELL, KEEP GOING › WINSTON CHURCHILL

QuoteExpress

Nearly 50 tourists from Ballari district, including MLA Nara Bharath Reddy, have been stranded in Dubai, while nine persons from Hassan district remain stuck in Bahrain and Dubai following flight suspensions triggered by the ongoing Iran–Israel conflict

DUBAI AIRPORT CLOSURE DELAYS EVACUATION EFFORTS; CM CONFIRMS KANNADIGAS ARE SAFE; DCM TERMS WEST ASIA WAR UNJUST, INHUMANE

Alipur comes to standstill as Shias mourn Khamenei

V VELAYUDHAM @ Chikkaballapur

THOUSANDS of Shia Muslims in Alipur village of Gauribidanur taluk in Chikkaballapur district staged a protest on Sunday, condemning the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in the US-Israeli strikes. Wearing black shirts, members of the community took out a procession through the village, raising slogans and expressing grief over the death of their religious leader.

Alipur, which has a population of nearly 22,000 Shia Muslims, saw large gatherings as people assembled at local mosques following reports of Khamenei's assassination. They mourned his death under the leadership of Moulana Mir Azhar Hussain. Anjuman-e-Jafria president Mir Ali Abbas, Imam-e-Juma Moulana Mohammed Yousha, Moulana Adeel and several others participated in the mourning programme.

Shia Muslim women gathered separately at Zainabiya and Sajjadia Ashurkhana, where special prayers were held. Community leaders announced a three-day mourning period.

The protest brought normal life in the village to a halt, with most residents voluntarily shutting down shops and business establishments. Central Range Inspector General of Police Labhuram told The New Indian Express that elaborate security arrangements had been made in the village.

Superintendent of Police Kushal Chouksey visited Alipur with additional police forces to monitor the situation. SP Chouksey said shops would reopen on Monday and clarified that authorities had not enforced any shutdown. "All establishments were closed voluntarily by residents," he said.

According to social worker Asgar Ahamed, Ayatollah Khamenei had visited Alipur in 1981 and inaugurated a 30-bed hospital, which continues to serve residents. "He is regarded as a spiritual leader by Shia Muslims across the world," he said.

Meanwhile, Chikkaballapur Deputy Commissioner G Prabhu said a dedicated call centre had been set up to assist residents of Alipur currently stranded in Iran. He said all necessary measures were being taken to ensure their safe return.

Chouksey said preliminary reports indicate that around 120 persons from the region, including students and businesspersons, are presently in Iran. Authorities are coordinating efforts on directions from higher officials, to facilitate their safe evacuation.

CONTACT HELPLINE

Those who require assistance can contact round-the-clock helpline numbers 9591178093 and 9845531026.

OVER 150 KANNADIGAS STRANDED IN DUBAI: Dr G PARAMESHWARA

Bengaluru: With the war raging in West Asia, over 150 Kannadigas, including students, are stranded in Dubai, Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara said on Sunday. "We are yet to receive complete details about the exact number of people stranded. Students from Chikkaballapur are among those affected. Over 150 Kannadigas, including students, are currently in Dubai. Efforts are on to contact all of them and bring them back safely. Officials are actively working to provide the necessary facilities. We have made all the required preparations to ensure they are brought back safely without any issues," he said.

Passengers stranded at the Kempegowda International Airport as the escalating West Asia conflict hits airline operations in Bengaluru on Sunday| KEVIN NASHON

US-Israel action unnecessary: CM

Bengaluru: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday condemned the United States-Israel attack on Iran and the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, terming the military action unnecessary. Speaking to reporters at Shivamogga airport, Siddaramaiah criticised the United States for what he described as a contradictory stand on global peace. The Chief Minister said the Karnataka government is in constant touch with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to ensure the safety of Kannadigas stranded in Arab countries amid the escalating conflict in West Asia. He said efforts are underway to bring back around 30 people from Ballari district currently staying in Arab nations. Siddaramaiah added that Indians residing in Dubai are safe. The Chief Minister said he has reviewed the situation with the Chief Secretary and the State's Resident Commissioner regarding the safety of Kannadigas abroad. As Dubai airport has reportedly been shut, arrangements would be made to facilitate their return to India once operations resume. Siddaramaiah also said he had spoken over the phone with MLC Bhoje Gowda, who is presently in Dubai, and was informed that he is safe and staying at a hotel. Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar strongly condemned the ongoing conflict in West Asia, terming the violence unjust and inhumane, and urged immediate steps to ensure the safe return of Indians stranded in the region.

NEARLY 40 FLIGHTS CANCELLED AT KIA; PAX STRANDED WITHOUT STAY OR AID

INDRA S @Bengaluru

An atmosphere of uncertainty prevailed at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) on Sunday after nearly 40 flights were cancelled due to airspace restrictions following the war in West Asia. A total of 18 arrivals and 19 departures were called off on March 1, causing inconvenience to those travelling to or via Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Dubai and Doha.

Passengers alleged they were left stranded without accommodation, compensation or clear communication from airlines.

Devi Kaasirajan, travelling from Madurai to London via Bengaluru, said she and her husband learnt about the cancellation only after landing in Bengaluru. "We drove from Dindigul to Trichy, flew to Bengaluru, and only then found out that our flight was cancelled," she said.

"The airline said the cancellation was because of airspace closure, so we are not entitled to compensation. They've assured us that once the airspace opens, we can contact the call centre and be put on the next available flight at the same fare. But what if the next seat is two or three weeks later," she asked. "There's zero compensation; no hotel stay, nothing. We're left on our own. At the very least, there should be empathy and customer service," she complained.

Aditi Ganapathy, a university student travelling to the UK with her family after visiting relatives in Navi Mumbai, echoed similar concerns. "Bengaluru was just our layover. We were told our connecting flight was cancelled, and the communication has been terrible. They won't inform us about the next flight. We have been asked to watch the news for further information. There's no timeline, no clarity," she added.

Ahan Anand, a Grade 9 student, said he will miss school as classes resume in London on Monday. With no definite departure schedule, many families continue to wait anxiously at the airport, hoping for clarity amid the disruption.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATION

Construction Organisation, South Western Railway invites applications for engagement of Sector Expert from the Indian Railway Service of Engineers (IRSE) Officers who have **Retired from SAG or Higher Grade** for the purpose of Peer Review of DPRs for a period of 03 (Three) Years.

The Total Number of Requirements is for 03 Posts.

The last date for receipt of applications through e-mail in dycecnwbnc@gmail.com up to **24:00 hrs. of 25-03-2026** in a single and legible PDF file.

For further instructions/notification/other details please visit www.swr.indianrailways.gov.in > About Us > Contruction Organisation - > Engaging Sector Expert

Deputy Chief Engineer/Works/ Construction Bengaluru Cantonment

PUB/943/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

YOUR GUIDE TO SPICY LIVING

INDULGE — *Every Friday with* THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

PUBLIC NOTICE

I R.Mahendravarma practicing Advocate at below mentioned address and now I issuing public notice on behalf of my client Sri. SANJAY KUMAR JAIN S/o.Shankarlal Jain, Aged about 47 years, Residing at No.451, Site No.08, 3rd Main Road, Mathikere Bangalore North, Bangalore-560054 and he is willing to purchase below mentioned schedule property from its owner called Mr. SYPSON PHILIP, Aged about 36 years, S/o.Mr.Philp Nadackal, Residing at No.561, Nadackal, MES Road, Near J.P.Park, Muthylanagar, Bangalore-560054and now he is seeking that any person having any claim on same schedule property in any manner should write to the undersigned with documentary proof in support of your claim within **07 days** of issuances of this notice, failing which my client will proceed on the basis that there are no claims on same Schedule Property

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagarapalike New Khatha No.04,PID No. 2-186-4, situated at 2nd "G" No.17, Ward name J.P.Park, Bangalore (Earlier Property bearing Nos.1 and 2 formed in Sy.No.30/7 of Jalahalli Village, Yeshwanthapura Hobli, Bangalore North taluk) Measuring East to West 50 feet and North to South 60 feet and totally Measuring 3,000Sft, together with all rights appurtenances whatsoever under neath of above the surface and bounded on:

East by	20 feet Road
West by	Vacant Site
North by	Vacant Site and
South by	Site No.03

Sd/- **R.Mahendravarma** Advocate, No.42, R.G.Nagar, M.S.Playa, Bangalore-560097, Moile No.7795488467.

PURCHASE OF PROPERTY WITH LOSS OF SALE DEED

We both SHOUKAT ALI K KITTUR & Mrs. REHANABEGUM S KITTUR together are purchasing property from Mr. BALACHANDRA HEGDE, R/O. #21, "Shree', Green Valley Township, Bharatnagar 2nd stage, Magadi Road, Bangalore-560091, with property addressed Flat 209, DS Max Samruddhi Apartments Srigandhadakaval Bangaluru. The present owner has lost the original sale deed bearing #YPR-1-01825/ 2015-2016 dt. 22.06.2015. He has already lodged a complaint in the Karnataka Police Authority with No.2075997/2026 dt. 22.02.2026 about the loss. If anybody having objection for this purchase are requested to contact me over 9902330664 within 15 days from this advt date of 02.03.2026.

IN THE COURT OF THE XXXIX ADDL CITY CIVIL JUGDE AT BENGALURU (CCH-40)

P & SC No.120/2026

BETWEEN: 1. Smt. Nutan Laddha W/o. Late. Rameswar lal Laddha Aged about 72 years, **2. Smt. Ritu Moondra** W/o. Mayank moondra D/o.Late. Rameswar lal laddha Aged about 53, **3. Sri. Sharad Laddha** S/o. late. Rameswar lal Laddha Aged about 46 years

All are residing at No. 117, Old No.64, 12th Cross, Basappa Layout, Hanumanth Nagar, Bengaluru – 560019 ... **Petitioners**

And: Nil ...Respondent

PUBLIC NOTICE U/o 5 RULE 20 of CPC

Whereas the above named has made petition to this court under Section 372 of Indian Succession Act for the grant of Succession Certificate in favour of Petitioner, in respect of schedule mentioned below. The below mentioned schedule are held by Smt. Lutan Laddha, **Sri Sharad Laddha, Smt. Ritu Moondra, and me Sri. Sharad Laddha** The Petitioner No. 1 is the wife, Petitioner No. 2 is the daughter, and Petitioner No. 3 is the son of Late Rameshwar Lal Laddha, and they are survivors and legal heirs of Late Rameshwar Lal Laddha who Petitioner herein who expired on **11.12.2018**.

Interested parties are hereby called upon to appear before this court in person or by pleader duly instructed on **04-04-2026** at 11:00 A.M inform to show cause against the petitioner failing wherein the appearance will be heard and declared as Ex-Parte.

SCHEDULE OF SECURITIES

Equity Shares Holing with BgSE Financial Ltd. DP ID IN302148, and Client ID/ DEMAT Account No: 10583774

Sl. No.	ISIN name	Company	Account description	Quantity	Rate	Holding Value
1	INE028A01039	BANK OF BARODA EQ NEW FV RS. 2/- EQ NEW FV	Beneficiary	40	293.00	11720.00
2	INE395B01048	G.V. FILMS LIMITED EQ NEW FV RE. 1/- EQ NEW FV RE.1/-	Beneficiary	1000	0.51	510.00
3	INE758E01017	JO FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED EQ EQ	Beneficiary	1284	292.50	375570.00
4	INE013A01015	RELIANCE CAPITAL LIMITED EQ EQ	Beneficiary	13	12.35	160.55
5	INE330H01018	RELIANCE COMMUNICATIONS LIMITED EQ EQ	Beneficiary	290	1.09	316.10
6	INE217K01011	RELIANCE HOME FINANCE LIMITED EQ EQ	Beneficiary	13	2.88	37.44
7	INE002A01018	RELIANCE INDUSTRIES LIMITED EQ EQ	Beneficiary	2568	1539.80	3954206.40
8	INE036A01016	RELIANCE INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED EQ EQ	Beneficiary	20	164.54	3290.80
9	INE614G01033	RELIANCE POWER LIMITED EQ. NEW RS. 10 EQ. NEWRS. 10	Beneficiary	97	33.66	3265.02
10	INE7631 01026	TRANSFORMERS AND RECTIFIERS (INDIA) EQ NEW FV RE.1/- EQ NEW FV RE. 1/	Beneficiary	320	283.50	90720.00
		Total value				4439796.31

Given under my hand & seal of this court on 28-02-2026

By Order of the Court, Senior Registrar, City Civil Court, Bangalore.

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank

(A Government of India Undertaking)

Mahadevpura Branch

Octagonal Hall, KSIIDC Building, Dyavasandra Industrial Estate, Mahadevpura, Bengaluru 560048.

(Auction Sale Notice for Sale of movable Property)

SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable / movable Property under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described Immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Canara Bank, Mahadevpura Branch, Bengaluru, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 17.03.2026 (10.30 AM to 11:30 AM)** through E-Auction underthe Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

1. Name and Address of the Borrowers / Co-Borrowers/ Mortgagors /Guarantors: (1) M/s SB Industries C33 KSSIDC Industrial Estate, Bashettlli, Doddaballapura, Bangalore-561203. **(2) Mr. Suresh Kumar M** S/o S V Murugesh Achari, 239 B Narayanapura, Doorvaninagar Post, Bangalore-560016. **(3) Mr. Suresh Kumar M** S/o S V Murugesh Achari, #268/114, Krishnappa Building, 6th Cross, Whitefield Road, B Narayanapura Bangalore North- 560016.

Sl. No.	Description of Plant and Machinery	Name of Item	Yard Details	Reserve Price	EMD Amount	Incremental value at Bid
1.	Manufacturing of electroplated automobile components.	Automatic barrel plant with all accessories, Electroplating with zinc Automatic plant 100kg containing following accessories Tank, Oven 150 & 100kg, Dryer, Blower, Conveyor, Pipe line, Soft water plant, C.P.Tank, Rectifiers 500 700 & 1000amps, Dimmer, Transporter, P,V,C Tanks	All the Machineries are located at No.21, 1st Phase, KIADB Industrial area, Malur, Kolar District-563130.	Rs. 32,77,500/-	Rs. 3,28,000	Rs. 10,000/-

Total Liability Amount: Rs. 20,10,709.03 (Rupees Twenty Lakhs Ten Thousand Seven Hundred Nine And Three Paisa Only) as on 26-02-2026 together with further interest and incidental expenses and costs.

2. Name and Address of the Borrowers / Co-Borrowers/ Mortgagors /Guarantors: (1) M/s Vishnu Industries, Shed No.5, Plot No.21, First Phase, KAIDB Industrial Area, Malur Kolar-563130. **(2) Mr. Suresh Kumar M** S/o S V Murugesh Achari, 239 B Narayanapura, Doorvaninagar Post, Bangalore- 560016. **(3) Mr. Suresh Kumar M** S/o S V Murugesh Achari, #268/114, Krishnappa Building, 6th Cross, Whitefield Road, B Narayanapura, Bangalore North, Karnataka-560016.

Sl. No.	Description of Plant and Machinery	Name of Item	Yard Details	Reserve Price	EMD Amount	Incremental value at Bid
1.	Zinc electroplating, Cobalt & Iron plating, Barreling, Phosphate, Blacking, Passivation	Automatic barrel plant with all accessories, Electroplating with zinc Automatic plant 100kg containing following accessories Tank, Oven 250 & 300kg, Dryer 50kf 2 no's, Blower 6 No's, Barrels 6 No's, Pipe line, Soft water plant, C.P. Tank, Rectifiers 5 No's, 500 amps DC 700amps& 1000amps, Dimmer 6 No's, Transporter, P,V,C Tanks few numbers. Duct scrubber, Furnace. and other accessories	All the Machineries are located at No.21, 1st Phase, KIADB Industrial area, Malur, Kolar District-563130.	Rs. 14,25,000/-	Rs. 1,42,500/-	Rs. 10,000/-

Total Liability Amount: Rs. 59,60,840.59 (Rupees Fifty Nine Lakhs Sixty Thousand Eight Hundred Fourty And Fivety Nine Only) as on 26.02.2026 together with further interest and incidental expenses and costs.

Date & Time of Auction : 17-03-2026 - 10.30 AM to 11:30 AM.

Property Inspection Date & Time : 27-02-2026 to 16-03-2026 Upto 4.00 PM.

Place of Auction : Online, On or before : 16-03-2026 Upto 4.00 PM

Known encumbrances, if any: There are no encumbrances to the knowledge of the Bank.

Details of Auction service provider: Baanknet.com portal (M/s PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd), you may contact the helpdesk support of baanket (Contact details 7046612345/6354910172/8291220220/9892219848/8160205051, Email: Support.BAANKNET@psballiance.com.

For further details, Govind Solanki (RO East) (Name of Authorised Officer & its team CO/RO/Branch, Ph. No. Mobile (7676721177) may be contacted during office hours on any working day. The service provider Baanknet (M/s PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd), (Contact No. 7046612345/6354910172/ 8291220220/9892219848/ 8160205051, Email: support.BAANKNET@psballiance.com./ support.ebkray@procure247.com)."

Date : 28.02.2026
Place: Bengaluru

Sd/- Authorised Officer
Canara Bank

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my client, intends to purchase the **"Schedule Property"** from its present owner i.e., Sri.Range Gowda. Any person/s, Company, Firm or Institutions, Private or Government Authority, Individual Person/s or relatives, any General Public, whomsoever claiming to have any right, title or interest in the Schedule Property or any part thereof, or objecting to such sale in favour of my client, should lodge their objections in writing with all supporting documentary evidence to the under signed within 10 days from this publication, failing which my client will proceed to complete the Sale formalities on the basis that there are no encumbrances, claims, lien or charges etc whatsoever.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing **House List No.31**, Sy.No.18/4, New CMC Khata No.41, Property No.18/4/31, BBMP PID No.18/4/31, New E-Khata PID No.2000752429, situated at Sector No.7, I.T.I Layout, Yellukunte Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, presently comes under BBMP, Ward No.190 - Mangammanapalya, measuring East to West 40 ft and North to South 30 ft in all measuring 1200 sq.ft and bounded on East by Site No.36; West by : Road; North by Site No.30 and South by Site No.32:

Leelavathi .D., Advocate, No.16, SWAMY NILAYAM, 2nd Cross, 2nd Main Road, MSHS Layout, Anandnagar, R.T. Nagar, Bangalore 560024. Ph : 9886147141 email leelaraghava.lee@gmail.com

BHAGWAN MAHAVEER JAIN HOSPITAL, BANGALORE

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the public that **Bhagwan Mahaveer Jain Hospital** will be disposing of all medical records, including investigation reports, for both In-Patient and Out – Patient, that were created up to **31st December 2020.**

If you wish to obtain a copy of your old medical records, please contact the undersigned either in person or through an authorized representative. A written request for the records will be required.

Important Note: These records will no longer be available after **20th March 2026**, we urge all individuals who wish to obtain copies of their medical records to make a request before this deadline, as they will be permanently disposed of after this date.

For further details or assistance, please Contact : **Dr. Umesh N, Medical Director** Bhagwan Mahaveer Jain Hospital, Millers Road, Vasanthnagar, Bangalore – 560052 Tel: **(080) 40875500, 40875555 (Extn – 2812)** Email: **md@bmjh.org**

QuoteExpress — IT ALWAYS SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE UNTIL IT'S DONE › NELSON MANDELA

PUBLIC NOTICE

Form No. INC - 26

[Pursuant to Rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014]

Advertisement to be published in the newspaper for change of registered office of the company from one state to another

BEFORE THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR, BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

AND In the matter of sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Companies Act, 2013 and clause (a) of sub-rule (5) of rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014

AND

IN THE MATTER OF M/s **NOVACAST INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED (CIN: U72200KA2013PTC071264)** (HEREINAFTER AS THE COMPANY), HAVING ITS REGISTERED OFFICE AT #OFFICE NO. 253, BHATTRAHALLI NO. 14, OLD MADRAS ROAD, KR PURAM BANGALORE, KARNATAKA, INDIA, 560049.... Petitioner

Notice is hereby given to the general public that the Company proposes to make an application to the Central Government under Section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the Special Resolution passed at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on January 28, 2026 to enable the Company to change its registered office from **The State of "Karnataka" to The State of "Tamil Nadu".**

Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the Company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal (www.mca.gov.in) by filing investor complaint former cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director at the address "E" Wing, 2nd Floor, Kendriya Sadana, Kormangala, Banglore-560034, Karnataka within 14 (Fourteen) days of the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant Company at its registered office at the address mentioned below:

Office No. 253, Bhattrahalli No. 14, Old Madras Road, Kr Puram Bangalore-560049, Karnataka, India.

For and on behalf of the Applicant
M/s NOVACAST INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
SD/-
ARAVINDHAN BAKTHAVATHSALAM
Director
DIN: 08043683

Date: 02/03/2026
Place: Bangalore

Chief secy writes to MEA, civil aviation min

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

CHIEF Secretary **Shalini Rajneesh** has written to the Ministries of external affairs and civil aviation, seeking repatriation of Kannadigas and immediate assistance for Indian nationals, including Kannadigas, stranded due in West Asia because of the prevailing situation that has disrupted flight operations.

In a letter to the Ministry of External Affairs, Shalini Rajneesh stated that while immediate developments are centred around conflict zones, their ripple effects are being felt across key hubs such as Dubai and other countries in West Asia, where a substantial number of Kannadigas stay for employment, higher education, business engagements, tourism, and official assignments. She requested that all necessary assistance be extended through the concerned Indian embassies and consulates to ensure the safety and well-being of Kannadigas who are in the affected zones.

She urged the ministry to consider arranging priority evacuation or special repatriation measures, if required, for stranded individuals from Karnataka and elsewhere in India. Further, she sought the establishment of a dedicated coordination mechanism with the state government to facilitate timely information sharing and an effective response.

In a separate letter addressed to Samir Kumar Sinha, Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Shalini Rajneesh highlighted that several tourists who had booked return tickets with various airlines are unable to commence their journey as scheduled due to flight disruptions and the uncertainty arising from the present circumstances.

She urged the ministry to provide necessary assistance to stranded passengers, including complimentary boarding and lodging arrangements for those holding confirmed return bookings but unable to travel due to circumstances beyond their control.

Emergency ops centres open round-the-clock

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

THE State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) and all District Emergency Operations Centres (DEOCs) have been functioning round the clock to monitor developments and extend necessary assistance.

Officials said the EOCs are regularly updating advisories issued by the Ministry of External Affairs and Indian embassies and consulates in the affected countries. The Karnataka resident commissioner has also activated the Karnataka Bhavan team in New Delhi for coordination.

Helpline numbers and advisories issued by embassies and consulates have been disseminated to all DEOCs and widely circulated through official social media. The SEOC and the Office of the Karnataka resident commissioner are closely coordinating with the Rapid Response Cell of MEA. People from Karnataka residing in the affected Middle Eastern countries have been told to strictly adhere to local government guidelines and advisories. They have also been advised to contact respective Indian embassies and consulates through helpline numbers and register on the Sarthi Sahayata portal and other official platforms.

Karnataka State Emergency Operation Numbers: 080-22340676 and 080-2225 3707 (short code 1070).

In the wake of the massive explosion at a firecracker manufacturing unit in Kakinada district, Andhra Pradesh, in which 20 people were killed on Saturday, police in West Godavari district launched extensive inspections of firecracker manufacturing and sales units across the district

Modi accuses DMK govt of mishandling Deepam row

Says ministers involved in transfer, sand mining, Tasmac scandals

MS THANARAJ @ MADURAI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi performs rituals at the Arulmigu Subramaniya Swami Temple in Thiruparankundram in Madurai on Sunday | EXPRESS

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday launched a flurry of attacks on the ruling DMK in Tamil Nadu, accusing the party of corruption, administrative failure and stalling key infrastructure projects.

Addressing a massive gathering of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in Madurai, Modi alleged that the DMK had done nothing since coming to power in 2021 but loot the public. "DMK ministers are competing with each other for involvement in scams, such as Rs 365 crore in transfer bribery, Rs 4,700 crore in sand mining, and Rs 40,000 crore in Tasmac irregularities," he alleged. He cited Congress veteran Kamaraj as an example of honesty in politics.

Modi also blamed the DMK for the death of devotee Poorna Chandran, who he claimed ended his life demanding the lighting of the Karthigai Deepam atop the contested 'deepathoon' at the Thiruparankundram temple. Modi said he met Chandran's wife Indumathi as well as their sons and offered condolences. Later, in a post on X, the PM claimed, "This tragedy was caused by the insensitivity of the DMK government, and no matter what they do, the truth will triumph. Devotees of Lord Murugan will win."

Taking a swipe at the Congress, he said that Tamil Nadu was the first state to liberate itself from the national party's rule. "Out of vengeance, Congress gave away Katchatheevu, and the DMK in the state did nothing to stop it. Similarly, when Congress was at the centre, DMK supported the ban on jallikattu, but the NDA government facilitated an amendment and saved the traditional sport, and also installed the Sengol in the new Parliament complex, further honouring Tamil culture," he claimed.

Regarding the state's infrastructure, the PM alleged that while the previous Congress-DMK union governments had neglected projects, the BJP government had modernised the Pamban Bridge and increased railway allocation to the state from ₹880 crore (2009-2014) during Congress reign to Rs 7,600 crore. Drawing a contrast between the centre's performance and the state's alleged failures, Modi claimed that the union government has sanctioned over 6 lakh houses for the poor under the PM Awas Yojana while the DMK administration has stalled completion of 3 lakh homes by neglecting conduct of field surveys. Modi further accused the DMK of fostering "mafia-type politics" in Madurai, pointing to poor drainage system, infrastructure, waste management failures, and a sharp drop in the city's cleanliness ranking, all of which, he claimed, led to the city's mayor stepping down.

Expressing concern over the state of law and order in Tamil Nadu, he said, "Women are in constant fear over the increasing number of crimes and the drug mafia is destroying families. Women remember how safe they felt during (late CM) Jayalalithaa's rule," he claimed, promising that an NDA-led state government will ensure strict action against criminals and the drug mafia.

Making a veiled reference to Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin's remarks, Modi said, "I heard someone from DMK say that they do not fear me or my Bharat. Let me say this clearly, in our democracy nobody needs to fear anything."

US-ISRAEL WAR ON IRAN

ISRAEL, PAKISTAN WON'T LET THEIR NEIGHBOURS LIVE IN PEACE: OWAISI

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Hyderabad

AIMIM president **Asaduddin Owaisi** on Sunday termed the "assassination" of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as an immoral and unlawful act. Stating that Khamenei is considered as the leader of Shia community, he condemned the attacks launched by US and Israel on Iran. "Trump and Netanyahu have launched attack on Iran during the holy month of Ramzan. Even during Ramzan, they are not honoring the humanity," he said.

The Hyderabad MP further said: "The war should end and India should play its role in ending the war. I hope the BJP government at the Centre condemns these killings." "About 10 million Indians are working in the Gulf countries. If the war does not stop, there will be turmoil in the region. Many Indians are now stranded there. If the war continues, oil prices will rise and even a difference of one dollar will have a huge impact on the Indian economy," he added.

Criticising Pakistan for its attack on Afghanistan, he said: "Both Pakistan and Israel won't let their neighbours live peacefully. If this war does not stop, the results will be very bad. Israel's attack on Iran and Pakistan's on Afghanistan prove that these are forces of aggression and mischief in their respective neighbourhoods."

Keralites in Gulf on alert as Iran offensive on

VARSHA SOMARAJ @T'PURAM

Passengers wait at Cochin International Airport on Sunday as countries across West Asia closed their airspace due to the Israel-Iran war | A SANESH

THOUSANDS of Malayali families across the Gulf spent sleepless nights shrouded in uncertainty as Iran continued its retaliation against the joint US-Israel strikes on Tehran, by targeting US military bases across West Asia.

It was an unusual day at the international terminal of Kochi airport. The driveways and entrances to both departure and arrival sections at terminal 3 -- normally one of the busiest in terms of the number of passengers to the Gulf -- remained deserted throughout Sunday. According to airport officials, around 70% of international flight traffic from Kochi were affected on Sunday. As many as 51 international departures were scheduled from Kochi on Sunday, besides 52 arrivals. While the airport authorities had by Saturday night notified around 20 flight cancellations for March 1, Sunday morning saw almost all flights to Gulf countries including the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar being cancelled.

"In just a day, everything changed from normal. I saw a missile being intercepted. We heard sirens, but there was no clear information," said Aadithya, an Alappuzha native residing in Bahrain, where US military installations are located close to civilian areas, describing how life had taken a turn for the worse since the strikes began on Saturday.

"All we could hear were loud sounds. Immediately, my family in Kerala started calling nonstop. We began storing food and essentials," he said.

In Qatar, residents near the Al-Udeid Air Base reported early morning tremors after Iran targeted US military bases. A Malayali healthcare worker living in Doha's Fereej Bin Mahmoud said she woke up to her building shaking.

Kerala CM writes to PM expressing concern over safety of Indians in Gulf

T'puram: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressing concern over the situation following the attack on Iran and its impact on countries in the Gulf region.In his letter, the Chief Minister shared apprehensions about the developments and their adverse impact across the region. He pointed out that a large number of Indian nationals, including many from Kerala, are residing in Gulf countries, and that their relatives and civil society are anxious about the situation. The Chief Minister stressed the need for preparedness to ensure the safety of expatriates, including steps to bring them back safely if the situation demands. He noted that he was confident that the union government would be seriously considering the matter. Pinarayi Vijayan informed the Prime Minister about the anxiety regarding the safety and security of Indian nationals in the region, a major number of whom are from Kerala.He also assured that the state government is ready to extend all possible assistance, including setting up helplines to enable relatives to contact expatriates. ENS

Rahul coming to TG today, may finalise names for RS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Hyderabad

CONGRESS leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha **Rahul Gandhi** will participate in the Sangathan Srijan Abhiyan — a training programme for District Congress Committee (DCC) presidents — in Vikarabad on Monday.

Coinciding with his visit, the party's state leadership is preparing the groundwork for announcing its candidates for the Rajya Sabha elections scheduled for March 16.

The TPCC Political Affairs Committee (PAC), regarded as the party's highest decision-making body in the state, is also slated to meet in Vikarabad the same day. The meeting will be attended by Telangana AICC in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan, senior leaders and Cabinet ministers. Deliberations are expected to focus on recent political developments and the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls. The PAC is likely to pass a resolution authorising the party high command to finalise the candidates.

Rahul is scheduled to meet senior state Congress leaders. Party sources said that while Rahul usually addresses public meetings during his visits to Telangana, the decision to convene a PAC meeting this time has generated political interest. Another key engagement in his itinerary is a meeting with former Maoist leaders who recently surrendered before the state government.

The leaders had earlier met Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to discuss political developments, and a similar interaction is expected with Rahul. Meanwhile, a crucial preparatory meeting was held on Sunday, during which Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and other senior leaders are learnt to have discussed probable candidates, including representatives from the Reddy and Backward Classes communities.

'ABUSED & NEGLECTED'

83 girls shifted from Tiruchy care home

PEARSON LENEKAR SR @ Tiruchy

EIGHTY-three girls were shifted from a private children's care home, receiving government aid, near Tiruchy airport on Saturday, while the institution's children's home wing has been temporarily closed following a preliminary inquiry that confirmed allegations of verbal abuse and physical threats to inmates, officials said.

The home, Annai Ashramam on Wireless Road, is run by Tamil Nadu Pengal Nala Sangam and supported through government grant-in-aid. It housed girls from Class 1 to 12 who had been placed there by the Child Welfare Committee as Children in Need of Care and Protection under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act. Complaints had surfaced in recent months that children were not given food on time, faced safety concerns and were subjected to verbal abuse and physical threats by some staff members, said sources.

Sources revealed to TNIE that the physical abuse included beatings and undergoing strict punishments by the caretaker. On Wednesday, acting on a tip-off, officials visited the home under the guise of a routine inspection. They enquired into the treatment provided to the children, how illnesses were being managed and whether proper food was being served. Based on the initial findings, Collector V Saravanan ordered a detailed inquiry later in the week.

District Child Protection Officer Sandhiya and a team subsequently interacted with the inmates. According to officials, several children reiterated the allegations during the inquiry. "We received complaints that the children were not properly cared for and were subjected to verbal abuse and threats. When we revisited the home, the complaints were repeated. Based on the statements of the children, we found sufficient grounds to initiate action," the DCPO said.

Following the preliminary findings, the collector on Saturday directed immediate relocation of all 83 girls as a precautionary measure. Of them, 36 were shifted to the Nagammai Home in KK Nagar and 47 to the government-run Annai Sathya Home in Mathur, considering both their safety and the fact that several students are preparing for public examinations.

EXPRESS READ

Mediation in DNA of Indians, says CJI

Vijayawada: Stating that Indians possess an inherited DNA of mediation, citing Lord Sri Krishna as codified mediator who tried to resolve war between Pandavas and Kauravas, Chief Justice of India Surya Kant emphasised the importance and value of mediation as a very effective judicial method for the resolution of disputes. The CJI attended as a chief guest the State Level Symposium on Mediation 'Dialogue as Cornerstone of Justice' organised by the Andhra Pradesh State Legal Services Authority in Vijayawada on Sunday. ENS

Talks with DMK positive, says Congress

Chennai: All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge for Tamil Nadu Girish Chodankar on Sunday said the DMK had offered the Congress 25 seats in the upcoming Assembly election, which was not acceptable to the Congress. He was speaking to a news agency in Delhi about the recent seat-sharing negotiations held with the DMK. However, he described the hour-long meeting between the committees of the two parties as positive and expressed hope that the Congress's wish list submitted to the DMK would be accepted. ENS

People hold portraits of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei during a protest against the latter's killing, in Chennai, on Sunday | ASHWIN PRASATH

Shias march to US consulate in Chennai

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

AT least 200 members of the Tamil Nadu Shia Muslim Jamaat attempted to march towards the US Consulate General Chennai on Cathedral Road on Friday, demanding that the United States immediately halt its attacks on Iran.

The protesters rallied from Royapettah Government Hospital on Peters Road to New College in Royapettah, condemning the reported killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and urging an end to the conflict. Slogans were raised against US actions, and India was called upon to intervene diplomatically.

Police stepped up security around the consulate and adjoining roads to prevent the march from proceeding further. A source said that the group was detained and released later in the evening. A case under relevant sections of the BNS was registered. VCK president Thol. Thirumavalavan, also participated in the protest.

CPM, CPI, VCK and CPI(ML) have also called for a demonstration protest in Chennai and major cities across the state on March 3 to condemn the war against Iran and demand that the war be stopped immediately.

Telugu people on edge amidst falling missiles

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Hyderabad

SEVERAl Telugu speaking people were stranded at airports across Gulf countries on Sunday with Israel and the United States intensifying war on Iran and several airlines cancelling flights. The rising tensions have triggered anxiety among Indian expatriates, including many from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh working in the region.

Several residents in the Gulf reported hearing explosions and witnessing missile interceptions in the skies as regional air defence systems attempted to neutralise incoming projectiles. M Ravi, an Andhra Pradesh native working in Abu Dhabi, said terrifying missile attacks began on Saturday afternoon. According to him, authorities have been intercepting most of the missiles and drones, but falling debris has created panic among residents.

"Though the missiles are being intercepted efficiently, debris from them is falling in different areas. Today, debris from a missile landed around 6-8 kilometres away from where we live, triggering a huge sound and causing vibrations. I have been living in Abu Dhabi since 2007 and have never experienced such a situation," he said.

36 Hyd flights cancelled

HYDERABAD: As many as 36 flights to and from Hyderabad were cancelled on Sunday following the closure of airspace in parts of West Asia amid escalating tensions between Iran and Israel. Airport sources said IndiGo cancelled 31 flights scheduled for Sunday and a total of 59 services to and from Hyderabad over three days as a precaution. The affected routes included services to Kuwait, Muscat, Doha, Abu Dhabi, Ras Al Khaimah, Medina, Jeddah, Dammam, Riyadh, Sharjah, Dubai and Dhaka. In addition, one incoming and one outgoing flight operated by Etihad Airways to and from Abu Dhabi were cancelled. Emirates cancelled two services, one arrival from Dubai and one departure to Dubai, while one Air India flight from Hyderabad to Dubai was also called off.

PM Narendra Modi and MEA have started the process to evacuate Indians. Odisha CM, Mohan Charan Majhi taken up the matter with the Centre, people of the state too will return home safe —Prithiviraj Harichandan, Odisha Law Min

14th edition: ThinkEdu conclave returns to Chennai

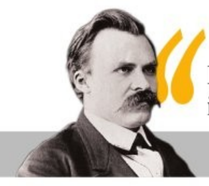
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

THE ThinkEdu Conclave returns to Chennai for its 14th edition, bringing together over 45 voices from diverse fields to examine the forces transforming India's education landscape. As India charts its course towards 2047, the centenary of Independence, the classroom has emerged as the crucible where the idea of an self-reliant India will be realised. Against this backdrop, this year, ThinkEdu will be anchored in the theme of 'Education for Atmanirbhar Bharat 2047'. The two-day event seeks to ignite conversations on AI, policy, culture, leadership, and the churn redefining the nation's most vital pillar of growth.

Presented by Tata Grouo and Tara Consultancy Setvices with Rajalakshmi Group of institutions as title sponsor, the conclave will be inaugurated by Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi on Monday, setting the tone for discussions that span defence strategy, emerging technologies, and the evolving role of youth in nation building. Former Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria, former Director General of the Assam Rifles Lieutenant General (Retd) Shokin Chauhan and former Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Luxembourg, Belgium and European Union Manjeev Singh Puri, in their sessions will examine India's place in a tumultuous world order. While West Bengal Governor Dr C V Ananda Bose, senior BJP leader K Annamalai and former civil servant Dr Irai Anbu will discuss the realm of public service in their sessions, Bihar Governor Arif Mohammed Khan and Shuddhidananda, president of Advaita Ashrama, will address the need for spirituality in our public and inner lives.

Parliamentarians and public figures including Shashi Tharoor, Smriti Zubin Irani, Sachin Pilot, Maithili Thakur and John Brittas will engage in conversations on liberal arts education, women's leadership, youth politics and ideological debates shaping campuses on the first day of the conclave. From university governance and curriculum reform to healthcare equity and technological innovation, this year's conclave positions education as the foundation of India's journey toward Atmanirbhar Bharat 2047.

EDITORIAL



"Distrust everyone in whom the impulse to punish is powerful" — Friedrich Nietzsche

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

WEST ASIA ON THE BRINK: SHUN MINDLESS POWER, LET DIPLOMACY PREVAIL

THE killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei has plunged West Asia into one of its most perilous crises in decades. Striking at the apex of a regime is never a measured or limited military operation. This was an explicit attempt at regime change by force, executed unilaterally by two powerful nations without any international mandate. By bypassing diplomacy and global oversight, the region now faces confrontation with existential stakes. Survival, retaliation and chaos become the only metrics. When military action is framed around regime change, the fallout extends well beyond the initial strike. History offers grim lessons. Iraq in 2003 and Afghanistan in 2001 showed how removing or targeting regimes destabilises countries and regions. Power vacuums emerge and insurgencies flourish. Cycles of retaliation spiral unpredictably. Iran, now cornered and under existential threat, is likely to activate proxies, widen conflict across borders and treat survival as justification for escalation. Diplomacy becomes nearly impossible when hardliners interpret such strikes as proof that engagement offers no protection.

The stakes for India and the wider region are immediate and substantial. Iran straddles the Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly one-fifth of the world's oil flows. Nearly half of India's crude imports pass through this narrow chokepoint, much of it from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait. Even partial disruption could spike energy prices, raise freight and insurance costs and worsen inflation. The trade deficit could widen. Beyond energy, global shipping routes, regional trade and financial markets face severe stress. A broader regional conflict could destabilise Gulf economies, where over a crore Indians live and work, prompting humanitarian and economic crises.

Even amid escalating violence, the world and the region deserve better. Military force alone cannot deliver stability or strategic clarity, especially when regime change is imposed without mandate or consent. The urgent priority is to protect civilians and prevent further escalation. Reopening diplomatic channels is crucial before retaliation spirals into a regional and global crisis. Iraq and Afghanistan remain stark reminders: toppling regimes rarely produces order. It unleashes chaos, fuels insurgencies and deepens human suffering. In conflicts driven by survival, there are no clean victories. The consequences reverberate across borders. People in the region and beyond deserve a future defined by dialogue, restraint and careful engagement, not destruction. The choice is clear: act with prudence before it is too late.

HIDDEN RISKS OF DOG LICKS DEMAND ACTION

SHOCKING reports from the UK's Birmingham tell of an Indian-origin woman in her fifties who lost both hands, both legs and even her spleen after sepsis set in, triggered by nothing more dramatic than an affectionate lick on a small wound by her pet dog. The sheer ordinariness of the act makes the outcome unbearable. For those of us in India, this is not a distant curiosity. We already live with the daily dread of dog-related disease. According to the World Health Organization, nearly 20,000 rabies deaths occur in India annually, accounting for 36 percent of global fatalities.

The Supreme Court recently directed that stray dogs be sterilised, dewormed and immunised before release; rabid or aggressive animals be confined to shelters and feeding points be shifted away from crowded public streets. The court also stressed the strict implementation of the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023. These are necessary steps. Yet policy still circles largely around rabies, bites and visible attacks.

The Birmingham case forces us to confront a sinister danger. It is not the first. In April 2017, the *International Wound Journal* documented a 41-year-old Austrian man who went into septic shock after allowing his dog to lick a leg wound. He survived, but only after losing both legs below the knee, his nose and all his fingers. Such cases rarely enter public debate because a lick appears harmless, even tender.

Experts say a dog's saliva contains several bacteria, especially Capnocytophaga canimorsus, which can cause sepsis when the pathogen enters the bloodstream through an open wound or cut. People with low immunity, diabetics, the elderly, cancer patients undergoing treatment, organ transplant recipients, those with liver disease or on long-term steroid medications are at a higher risk. Sepsis or septicaemia is merciless. If neglected, the infection can turn into sepsis, the body can turn against itself and organs can begin to fail.

India has a growing pet culture and a vast vulnerable population. People must ensure affection does not replace caution. Any cut exposed to a dog's tongue must be washed thoroughly. Monitor symptoms such as fever, confusion, rapid heartbeat and unusual pain. They need immediate medical care. Public health messaging must widen its lens, acknowledging that invisible infections can be as deadly as the feared bite on a dark street in our cities.

QUICK TAKE

GENTLE VIGIL

THE US is reimagining elder care by launching a 'dementia village' with shops, a restaurant and a theatre designed to treat residents as people first, not patients. It's inspired by De Hogeweyk in the Netherlands, a pioneering gated community that values freedom, safety and social life over an institutional routine. Residents live as normally as possible with support, often reducing the need for strong medication. In India, where dementia cases may reach 16.9 million by 2036 and one in five citizens will be elderly by 2050, the challenge is greater. India needs higher budgets, a national dementia registry and public awareness to distinguish normal ageing from disease—ensuring timely diagnosis and compassionate care.

Many leaders and activists spend months or years in jail before trial. Later, courts find weak evidence but the harm cannot be undone and people's faith in justice suffers

BAIL, BARS AND THE BURDEN OF HARSH LAWS

KAPIL SIBAL
Senior lawyer and member of Rajya Sabha

MANDAR PARDIKAR

HARSH laws, even harsher bail provisions, investigations directed at political adversaries, protesting students, academics and journalists with the intent to topple and destabilise governments and silence dissent have become the order of the day. The Union government, working in tandem with the political party in power, uses laws by weaponising their provisions.

We saw the spectacle of protesting Youth Congress workers at Bharat Mandapam, perhaps not an entirely engaging sight, being incarcerated under suspect provisions of the law. We have seen, in recent times, students of Jawaharlal Nehru University being proceeded against and incarcerated for objecting to the remarks of the vice chancellor.

We witnessed Umar Khalid and others languishing in jail for years without bail. In the case of Khalid, his release from prison is not in sight. We have seen journalists writing against industry giants being visited with successive FIRs. At the same time, we have also seen ministers and political leaders of the present government, both at the Centre and the states, who are knee-deep in corruption and often make communal remarks, seeking to disturb public order yet are not proceeded against by the investigating agencies, maintaining a stoic silence.

Now, we are seeing the unbundling of false and fabricated prosecutions with Special Judge Jitendra Pratap Singh discharging Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and 21 others in the liquor policy case. I wonder how a prosecution in a bribery case relating to the alleged ₹100-crore scam could have been launched by the Central Bureau of Investigation without hard evidence. I wonder why those in power fail to realise how destructive it is for human dignity to be imprisoned on the mere plea that an investigation is underway.

Who will compensate Arvind Kejriwal for the 156 days he spent in custody? Who will compensate Manish Sisodia for the 530 days in jail? There is no accountability. In the process, the investigating agency at the behest of those in power, seeks to destroy reputations not just personally but politically. Incarceration results in personal agony when one is jailed alongside hardened criminals, thereby diminishing public confidence in the leaders of political parties.

For the court to find out after years of investigation that there was not even a *prima facie* case for the alleged criminal conspiracy or wrongdoing speaks volumes of the nature of investigation in our country. The finding that there was no evidence of an overarching conspiracy of criminal intent in the formulation of the 2021 excise policy, serious investigating lapses, reliance on uncorroborated statements, a chargesheet with significant gaps and implication of the accused without material, makes it apparent that the CBI, as an institution serves the political interests of the party in power.

It also raises questions about the efficacy of the investigating procedures adopted by it. In situations like these, it is impossible to restore the *status quo ante*. Sometimes, it could also lead to political death. Surely, this is not how the investigating agencies should conduct themselves.

The saga does not end here. Allegations against Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren, again without substance, found him in jail for five months; an act of obvious vendetta politics with the intent to destabilise his government just before the assembly elections in the state. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha still won, a body blow to the targeted prosecution. Former Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel was targeted too, and his government was sought to be destabilised before the assembly elections. His son was later arrested along with thirteen others. The claim that such investigations are independent has been exposed.

The country now realises that all such probes are targeted. The unbundling of the allegations against former Haryana CM Bhupinder Singh Hooda, where the chargesheet filed in 2018 was quashed in February 2026, again because there was no *prima facie* case on the allegation that the Associated Journals Limited was allotted a plot of land at an undervalued price, is yet another example of targeted prosecution.

Former Bihar CMs Lalu Prasad Yadav and Tejashwi Yadav along with other family members were all sought to be prosecuted and summoned before a Delhi special court in a cooked-up case, again just before elections. The targeting of Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot, summons against Akhilesh Yadav, cases against Farooq and Omar Abdullah with CBI raids in 2018 and summons between 2019 and 2024 despite the Enforcement Directorate chargesheet having been quashed, summons against Mehbooba Mufti in 2021 and former Manipur CM Okram Ibobi Singh—all explain how false cases are foisted against political opponents, apart from demonstrating how generous the government is in targeting the opposition leaders and dissenting voices.

Of course, others against whom serious allegations were made, only to be won over by the BJP and rewarded with positions of power, indicate that all their sins are washed away instantly, but those who dare to oppose face prosecution and jail.

The question to be asked is: why has no minister or any politician of significance in the BJP been investigated at all, let alone with the same zeal with which opposition leaders are dealt with by the investigating agencies? The ED, established under the Prevention of Money-Laundering Act, seems to be an unbridled horse, a law unto itself. In the midst of all this, courts by and large are silent. The harsh provisions of the law are allowed to run their course and bail is granted in rare cases—that too, after long years in jail.

All is not well with our political system, but more than that, our political culture. Democracy needs men and women whose vision is not limited to sending opposition leaders to jail. Instead, we need to concentrate together on the serious challenges that our country faces. Given the necessity of debate and dialogue with all stakeholders, the country needs people of stature and commitment to realise the dreams of a Viksit Bharat.

The country hopes that in these chaotic times, the judiciary will stand up for justice consistent with the Constitution and laws.

(Views are personal)
(Tweets @KapilSibal)

LOTS AGAINST A PEOPLE

RENUKA NARAYANAN
FAITHLINE

TODAY marks the start of the ancient Jewish festival of Purim, which begins at sunset and ends at nightfall tomorrow. It celebrates the deliverance of the Jewish people from genocide in Persia. The story is found in the Book of Esther in the Old Testament.

'Ahasuerus' (Xerxes I or Khshayarsha in Old Persian) was the Achaemenid king of Persia in the fifth century BCE. He was a Zoroastrian who did not impose his faith on his subjects. The Achaemenid empire extended from Ethiopia to the Indus Valley across twenty satrapies or provinces. In 2005, I got to see the carvings of coolies in loincloths carrying baskets of tribute on their heads, at the Apadana Palace in Persepolis. The Indian province was the eastern limit of the Achaemenid empire and is mentioned twice in the Book of Esther as Houd, from Honoud or Hindu, the Persian pronunciation of Sindhu.

One day, a Jew named Mordecai of the tribe of Benjamin unearthed a plot by two palace guards, Bigthan and Teresh, to assassinate the king. He informed the chief of police and the two conspirators were caught and hanged. Mordecai's service was entered in the court records.

Khshayarsha, having quarrelled with his queen, Amastari (Vashti in the Bible), ordered the eligible girls in his capital, Susa, to appear before him so that he could select a new bride. Mordecai sent his beautiful orphan cousin Esther before the king, warning her not to disclose that she was Jewish. Esther was chosen and became queen. Mordecai had hoped to place her in that high position in case she could help the Jewish people someday, for trouble was brewing in Khshayarsha's court.

In particular, the vizier Haman was an Amalekite from a tribe of nomadic raiders with ancestral enmity against Jews. He was offended when Mordecai, who was sitting at the palace gate, did not rise at once to greet him. So, Haman plotted to wipe out the entire Jewish community across the Persian empire—men, women and children—in one day. Having poisoned the king's ear successfully, he obtained a royal order for the mass execution. He then cast lots in a fiendish lottery or draw for the date of the massacre. Purim means 'lots' from the old Akkadian word for dice 'pur'. The date fell on the fourteenth of the month of Adar (February-March).

Mordecai came to know of this demonic plan and put on sackcloth and ashes to publicly lament. He sent word to Esther to somehow stop the king. Anyone who approached the king in his inner court without being explicitly summoned was instantly put to death as a tight security measure. Esther resolved to risk it for the sake of her people and informed her cousin through a trusted palace servant, Hatach, "If I perish, I perish".

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The ancient festival of Purim marks the observance of millenniums of torment and persecution faced by the Jewish community. Deeply rooted in the tradition is remembering the selfless and humanitarian acts of Esther in saving the entire community across Persia from a genocide

She fasted for three days, sending word to the Jewish community to fast with her in solidarity. She then dressed in her royal robes and courageously approached the inner court, determined to do or die. Fortunately, the king showed his favour by holding out his golden sceptre, allowing her to approach and touch the tip. She invited him and Haman to grace a banquet in her royal apartments.

Esther could have lived an easy, luxurious life without the king suspecting her identity. But she preferred risking an honourable death in the service of her frequently invaded, displaced and tormented people, whose temples were destroyed, even in Jerusalem in the second century BCE by the Seleucid Greeks. The re-conquest and rededication of that temple was the reason for the festival of Hanukkah.

Haman had, meanwhile, already had gallows built on which to hang Mordecai. The night before Esther's banquet, the king had a bout of insomnia. His attendants fetched and read aloud from the court records to help him sleep. He learnt of Mordecai's service in preventing his assassination, and asked if he had been rewarded. He was greatly displeased that no such thing had happened. The next morning, he sent for Haman and asked how a man who had rendered a great service to the king should be honoured. Assuming that the king meant to reward him, Haman eagerly replied that such a man should be dressed in royal robes and paraded in the city on the king's own horse. To his chagrin and fury, the king ordered Mordecai to be so honoured.

That evening at the banquet, Esther revealed her identity and pleaded with the king to spare her and her people. Since a royal order couldn't be rescinded, the king allowed the Jews to defend themselves. Thousands of Haman's assassins were killed. Haman himself was hanged on the gallows he had built for Mordecai. Mordecai also killed Haman's ten sons to prevent their revenge. The fourteenth of Adar, the day of deliverance, has been celebrated every year after that as Purim. Jews observe it by listening to the Book of Esther read aloud in a synagogue, sharing food, giving charity to the poor, putting on fancy dress and having a feast. Triangular, sweet-centred cookies are made, called 'Haman's ears'.

Hitler banned the observance of Purim. Nazi attacks on Jews were often timed for Jewish festivals, even ritually killing Jews on successive Purims to 'avenge' Haman's sons. But Purim lives on as a joyous feast of remembrance and thanksgiving for yet another deliverance from annihilation. *'Am Yisrael Chai'*, meaning, 'The people of Israel live', affirming their survival against all odds.

(Views are personal)
(shebaba09@gmail.com)

MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Installing democracy

Ref: *History's Ghost* (Mar 1). The US and Israel striking Iran while preaching liberation is historically inaccurate, since military adventures have never once successfully installed genuine democracy. The region's civilians bear consequences while Washington and Tel Aviv trade self-serving assumptions disguised as precision strategy.
K Chidanand Kumar, Bengaluru

Meat view

Ref: *Diet no moral test* (Feb 28). Instead of banning open sale, the Bihar government could've framed rules on hygienic practices such as covering or refrigerating meat products instead of open displays. This could help prevent contamination and is also suitable from the aesthetic point of view.
N Rama Rao, Chennai

Peace sustenance

Ref: *Regime change war* (Mar 1). The strikes against Iran have pushed the region to the brink of wider conflict. Military responses may deliver short-term gains, but they rarely create lasting peace. Instead, they deepen mistrust and fuel further violence. What is urgently needed now is restraint, dialogue and a renewed commitment to diplomacy.
Firdhouse M K, Malappuram

Non-alignment policy

Ref: *Modi's Israel visit* (Mar 1). India's foreign policy is rooted in non-alignment and balance. Governments may change, but foreign policy should remain consistent. Today, it appears increasingly personalised, with little consultation with all stakeholders. India's global voice must be unified, principled and above partisan politics.
T Kailash Ditya, Hyderabad

Ecological breach

Ref: *Severe heatwave conditions in summer likely* (Mar 1). Extreme weather events strain the poor, outdoor workers and animals the most. India must treat these warnings seriously. The lesson is clear: respect the ecosystem today or tomorrow's climate may force people to move in search of survival.
R S Narula, Patiala

Omitting history

Ref: *Double-deckers back on city roads* (*The Morning Standard*, Feb 28). The proposed itinerary totally ignores famous landmarks like Qutub Minar, Red Fort, Humayun's Tomb and Jama Masjid. The city heritage promotion claim simply flies in the face of glaring omissions. Or is it a subtle, well-orchestrated ploy for reshaping ideological narratives?
Amit Banerjee, New Delhi

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POSTS OF THE DAY

Mahua Moitra @MahuaMoitra
America is using tax dollars to bomb little schoolchildren in Iran while healthcare has been slashed to a point where communities are using GoFundMe to buy insulin.

Akhilesh Yadav @yadavakhilesh
In these circumstances war targeting everyone from the most prominent figures to ordinary citizens of any country, our government should clarify its stance

Yogi Adityanath @myogiadityanath
Heartfelt birthday greetings to Manipur CM @YKhemchandSingh Ji. May you be blessed with excellent health, long life, and a glorious life

US, Israel 'fury' pounds Iran defence

Multidomain offensive centres on airpower, with precision strikes neutralising Islamic republic's counter systems

A Tehran neighbourhood suffers major damage after the joint attack of the US and Israel on Sunday | PTI

JAVARIA RANA @ New Delhi

THE US-Israel strikes on Iran in the early hours of Saturday, carried out under Operation Epic Fury and Operation Roaring Lion, mark one of the most expansive military escalations in West Asia in recent years, bringing into focus how both sides are structured to fight.

The opening wave began with coordinated air and missile strikes across multiple Iranian locations, including Tehran. The strikes killed Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, defence minister Aziz Nasirzadeh and IRGC chief Mohammad Pakpour, among others. Over the next 30 to 35 hours, US and Israeli forces expanded the target set to include command and control nodes, missile infrastructure, nuclear-linked facilities, air defence systems and naval assets. Iran responded with missile and drone strikes targeting Israel and US military bases across Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE, Kuwait, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

This newspaper looks at how the unfolding exchange reflects two contrasting military doctrines -- the US-Israel model built on precision and networked operations and Iran's on scale, dispersal and survivability. The US-Israel offensive is structured as a multi-domain strike campaign built around SEAD/DEAD (Suppression and Destruction of Enemy Air Defences), with airpower at its core and stand-off precision strike capability extending operational reach.

The opening phase was focused on neutralising Iran's integrated air defence system. This allowed follow-on strike packages to operate in a degraded threat environment. Israeli Air Force's F-35 stealth fighters executed deep-penetration strike missions against heavily defended targets. These were supported by electronic warfare and cyber operations to disrupt Iranian sensor networks, degrade target acquisition and compress response timelines.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said about 200 fighter jets had taken part in an "extensive attack against the missile array and the defence systems" in western and central Iran. A senior US official told Fox News that approximately 900 strikes were conducted within the first 12 hours.

The USS Abraham Lincoln carrier strike group in the Arabian Sea and the USS Gerald R. Ford carrier strike group in the Eastern Mediterranean are providing embarked air wings, escort combatants and vertical launch system-based strike capability. US Army units deployed in the Gulf are assessed to be providing long-range precision fires through platforms such as the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, or HIMARS.

"CENTCOM's Task Force Scorpion Strike is using one-way attack drones in combat during Op Epic Fury. These drones, modelled after Iran's Shahed drones, are delivering American-made retribution," the US Central Command said.

Tehran bombards major enemy lines with swarm of drones and missiles

JAVARIA RANA @ New Delhi

IRAN has responded to the US-Israel strikes with missile and drone attacks targeting US allies and assets across the Gulf.

Qatar, Bahrain, Jordan and Kuwait, all hosting US bases, reported intercepting incoming projectiles, though falling debris caused damage on the ground. Iran's strategy hinges on overwhelming air defence systems through sheer volume, launching large salvos of ballistic missiles and drones simultaneously to saturate air defence systems like the THAAD, Iron Dome, David's Sling and Arrow-3. This response is centred on Iran's missile arsenal, with an estimated 1,500 ballistic missiles still operational. These include Fateh-series short-range systems and medium-range missiles such as Shahab-3, Ghadr and Emad, with ranges up to 2,000 km.

A key strength in Iran's survivability are the mobile launchers and hardened underground "missile cities" which allow the country to absorb initial strikes while retaining the ability to respond. The country also fields land-attack cruise missiles such as Soumar and Hoveizeh, which fly at low altitudes and are harder to detect, though their deployment in the current conflict remains unconfirmed.

Smoke rises after an Iranian drone attack in the port area of Dubai

Iran's flagship loitering munition, Shahed-136 has been deployed alongside missile salvos to strike military bases and targets across the Gulf.

Iran's manned airpower remains limited. Its fleet of ageing F-14s, F-4s, MiG-29s and Su-24s is constrained by sanctions, pointing to its reliance on ground launched missiles and drones. Its air defence network, comprising S-300, Bavar-373 and Khordad-15 systems also lacks the integration of Western systems, making it vulnerable to electronic warfare.

US-ISRAEL

AIRPOWER BACKED BY STAND-OFF CAPABILITY

- **Airpower** F-35 stealth fighters led deep-strike missions against heavily defended targets. Carrier-based F/A-18E/F Super Hornets and Israeli F-16s supported strike and suppression
- **Stand-off weapons** RGM-109 Tomahawk land-attack cruise missiles were launched from Arleigh Burke-class destroyers in the Arabian Sea and Eastern Mediterranean
- **Force projection** 2 carrier strike groups, led by USS Lincoln and USS Ford, provided embarked air wings and escort warships
- **Ground-based fires** HIMARS units deployed in the gulf provided long-range precision strike capability

AIR AND MISSILE DEFENCE
Patriot PAC-3 and THAAD systems were deployed to intercept Iranian missile and drone attacks

IRAN

SATURATION STRIKES ACROSS THE GULF

- **Ballistic missiles** Fateh-series short-range missiles and Shahab 3, Ghadr and Emad medium-range systems formed the backbone of Iran's retaliatory strikes
- **Cruise missiles** Soumar and Hoveizeh land-attack cruise missiles, capable of low-altitude flight, add to strike capability, though operational use remains unclear
- **Unmanned systems** Shahed 136 loitering munitions deployed alongside missiles to strike targets & saturate air defences
- **Air defence network** Layered systems include S300, Bavar-373 and Khordad 15, supported by short-range systems

AIRPOWER
Iran's ageing fleets of F-14, F-4, MiG-29 and Su-24 aircraft remain operational, but play a secondary role

Iran's mission asks countries to condemn leader's death

ADITI RAY CHOWDHURY @ New Delhi

AMID the crisis between Iran and the US-Israel that led to the killing of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Iranian embassy in India on Sunday requested governments around the world to strongly condemn the Israel-US attack on Iran and the killing of their supreme leader.

Releasing a statement, the mission expressed its "profound sorrow and grief" over Khamenei's death.

The Iranian embassy in New Delhi lowered its national flag to half-mast on Sunday to mourn Khamenei's death.

Vowing to avenge his death, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps said it has already carried out retaliatory attacks on American bases in the Middle East. Early on Sunday, Iranian state media confirmed that Khamenei was killed in the attack by Israel and the US.

According to the Iranian mission, "The embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in India calls upon independent and freedom-seeking governments around the world to strongly condemn this blatant crime and to refrain from remaining silent in the face of lawlessness and aggression." It also stated that the US and Israel will have to endure the "grave consequences of this unforgivable crime."

"Iran, as always, will continue its noble path with strength, resilience, and determination. No disruption shall be permitted in the ongoing affairs of the country," they said.

15 sailors rescued, states want Centre to help

HELPLINES LAUNCHED

The Centre has activated emergency helplines through its missions across the Gulf. In Kuwait, the embassy can be reached at +965 65501946. In Oman, at 8007 1234 and WhatsApp at +968 9828 2270. For Iran, contacts are +989128109115, +989128109102, +989128109119 & +989932179359. In Saudi, it is 00-966-11-4884697, WhatsApp no. +966 542126748 and 800 247 1234. Bahrain has +973 39418071, while the UAE has 800-46342 & WhatsApp line +971 543090571.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

AN oil tanker carrying 20 crew members, including 15 Indians and five Iranians, and an Omani port near the strategic Strait of Hormuz were targeted in strikes on Sunday, marking the first reported attacks on the sultanate since Tehran launched retaliatory operations across the Gulf.

Oman's official news agency said the tanker, SKYLIGHT flying the flag of the Republic of Palau, was hit five nautical miles north of Khasab port. The incident occurred amid exchanges of strikes between Iran, the US and Israel. According to news agency, all 20 crew members were safely evacuated. Four crew members sustained injuries.

The UAE has confirmed that Indians were among 58 people injured in Iranian strikes. Meanwhile, reports have emerged of Indian nationals stranded at airports across the region, prompting states to urge the Centre for help. More than 100 students and other residents from Rajsthan's Jodhpur, Kota and Sikar are reported to be stranded at airports and hotels in the UAE after flights were cancelled. Several were evacuated from airports in Dubai and Abu Dhabi to nearby hotels.

With many from Uttarakhand pursuing education or jobs in Iran, Bahrain, and the UAE, harrowing accounts of missile strikes are reaching home via video calls and messages. A group of prominent persons from Indore, including two former MLAs Sanjay Shukla and Vishal Patel, are stuck in a Dubai hotel. "Bombs are exploding all around," Shukla shared in a video message.

Shia Muslims hold a massive demonstration in Sringar against the killing of Iranian Supreme Leader on Sunday | ZAHOOR PUNJABI

Shias protest over Khamenei killing

FAYAZ WANI & ANURAAG SINGH @ Srinagar/Bhopal

KASHMIR witnessed massive anti-US and anti-Israeli protests on Sunday as thousands of Shia Muslims took to the streets to denounce the killing of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Syed Ali Khamenei, in a joint US-Israeli strike. The Mutahida Majlis-e-Ulama (MMU), an amalgam of Islamic religious organisations in J&K led by Hurriyat Conference chairman and cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, has called for a shutdown in Kashmir on Monday.

Carrying pics and portraits of Khamenei, thousands of Shia protesters gathered at historic Ghanta Ghar in Lal Chowk to express their anger and grief. The administration has decided to impose restrictions in parts of the valley in view of the shutdown called by MMU.

Meanwhile, a mass condolence meeting and protest were held by the Shia Muslims in the Madhya Pradesh capital, Bhopal, to mourn and condemn Khamenei's death. The prayers were held at the Shia Mosque in the Karond area. After the meeting, over 100 members took out a protest march, raising slogans against the US and Israel.

Airlines cancel all flights to West Asia, traffic to Europe, US hit for 2nd day

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

THE aviation chaos due to the escalating tensions in the Middle East continued for the second consecutive day on Sunday with airlines from India cancelling all flights to the region and to some cities in the West, which are accessed via the closed airspace.

As per the Civil Aviation Ministry, a total of 350 flights were cancelled on Sunday. In line with an earlier directive issued by the aviation watchdog, the DGCA, to all airlines, they extended the cancellation of their flights up to 11.59 pm on Monday.

"In view of airspace restrictions arising from geopolitical developments in the Middle East, a total of 350 flights operated by Indian domestic carriers have been cancelled on March 1," the ministry said.

GROUNDED

1. A total of 350 flights were cancelled on Sunday, as per the Civil Aviation Ministry
2. 104 flights, 62 departures and 42 arrivals cancelled at Delhi airpor on Sunday

On Saturday, 410 flights were cancelled. Airlines have announced a full refund or rescheduling of all tickets booked until March 5 or 7 for bookings made before February 28.

IndiGo cancelled 166 flights to the region and to London on Sunday. It announced 162 cancellations on Monday and 42 for Tuesday too. A spokesperson for Air India Express said, "Air India Express has extended the suspension of flights to and from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE until 23:59 pm India Time (18.29 hrs UTC) of 2nd March."

Air India had already suspended all its flights to and from UAE, Qatar, Israel and Saudi Arabia. It also cancelled its flights to London, Birmingham, Amsterdam, Zurich, Milan, Vienna, Copenhagen, and Frankfurt from Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru on Sunday. On Monday, it will cancel flights to the Middle East and Birmingham, Copenhagen, and Zurich. SpiceJet flights to the Middle East were cancelled on Sunday and Monday.

INSIDER TRACK

Bureaucratic shake-up after Holi

A major reshuffle in the Union Government is likely after Holi, with 41 senior IAS officers cleared for Secretary-level posts. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved their empanelment, opening the door for new appointments across key ministries. Many departments are expected to get new Secretaries as part of this reorganisation aimed at refreshing administrative governance. Among those empanelled are Bihar cadre officers K K Pathak and B Rajendra. Pathak earned a reputation for strict discipline and bold reforms in Bihar's Education Department. Rajendra, who served as Patna's DM, is known for efficient administration.

Missing land papers trigger review

The Land and Development Office has begun a nationwide exercise to trace and update missing title documents of government-owned and leased land. The office, which works under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, manages central government land and leased properties. Officials found that key ownership records, boundary details and usage rights papers are missing for several land parcels across states and Union Territories. Concerned over gaps in record management, the office has written to the Directorate of Estates seeking details of properties under its control. These include General Pool Office Accommodation, residential quarters, holiday homes and touring hostels. The move aims to boost oversight and prevent disputes over government land holdings.

Telangana DGP race begins

The race to appoint a full-time Director General of Police in Telangana has gained pace after the state sent a list of eligible officers to the Union Public Service Commission. The panel will shortlist three names in accordance with the Supreme Court's directions. The final selection will be made from this panel. Senior IPS officers believed to be in contention include CV Anand, Prabhakar Apte, Sowmya Mishra, Shikha Goel and Abhilasha Bisht. It remains unclear whether the current in-charge DGP, B Shivadhar Reddy, is on the list.

Writers' PM call turns literary

It was meant to be a courtesy call — a thank-you meeting after Kerala was officially renamed Keralam. But for a group of eminent Malayalam writers, the visit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi turned into an unexpected literary exchange. Novelist and screenwriter George Onakkoor, veteran lyricist Sreekumaran Thampi, poet V. Madhusoodanan Nair, Kendra Bal Sahitya Akademi awardee Sreejith Moothedath and Dr A.M. Unnikrishnan walked in with gratitude and walked out pleasantly surprised. The PM, they said, spoke about Malayalam's linguistic roots, literary growth and cultural depth. The discussion also touched upon the Malayalam language Bill pending with the Governor.

'Compromise' goes to war

With just over a week before the Budget session resumes on March 9, the battle over "compromise" is already casting a long shadow. It began when LoP Rahul Gandhi brandished a book by former army chief Gen MM Naravane to question the Centre's response to China's aggression. The BJP shot back, citing controversial decisions of the Indian National Congress era. The Opposition escalated with "PM compromised" slogans over the Epstein files. Now, Nishikant Dubey and other BJP leaders are releasing archival material alleging that Indira Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were themselves compromised in office. Any truce before Parliament reconvenes looks unlikely; the looming session promises confrontation, not conciliation. Expect no easy compromise ahead.

LATHMAR HOLI

A case was registered against nine social media accounts in Mathura for posting "old videos" to allegedly malign the reputation of 'Lathmar Holi', an official said on Sunday.

2 KILLED AS CAR FALLS OFF BRIDGE IN BHILWARA

INDIA	Max	Min		Max	Min
Ahmedabad	37	22	Mumbai	31	21
Bhopal	34	17	Panaji	30	22
Jaipur	33	19	Patna	33	16
Amritsar	30	12	Lucknow	33	15
Chennai	33	21	Port Blair	31	25
Kolkata	34	24	Imphal	28	10
Srinagar	17	04	Chandigarh	30	15

Modi, Shah to address party's rally on March 15 in Kolkata, says Nabin • Mamata to lead agitation for inclusion of 'legal voters' on March 6

50 L 'infiltrators' deleted from Bengal poll list: BJP

SUBHENDU MAITI @ Kolkata

A day after the Election commission published electoral rolls after the SIR in West Bengal, BJP's national president Nitin Nabin on Sunday claimed that more than 50 lakh infiltrators have been removed from the voters' list in the state.

"Time is up for illegal immigrants in Bengal," Nabin said while flagging off the BJP's 'Paribartan Yatra' in Cooch Behar ahead of the assembly polls expected in April. The yatra will conclude after a mega rally on March 15 at Kolkata, which will be addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Union Home Minister Amit Shah may also join the concluding programme, according to BJP sources. 'Paribartan Yatra' was also kicked off separately from three places -- Garbeta in West Midnapore district, Kulti in Asansol, Krishnanagar in Nadia -- which were addressed by Union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan, Annapurna Devi and JP Nadda.

"Those removed from the electoral rolls were infiltrators, who had been availing of government jobs and benefits of welfare schemes meant for genuine citizens," Nabin said. "More than 50 lakh infiltrators have been removed from the voter list.

8.3% of electorate gone since onset of SIR

According to official data released on Saturday, 63.66 lakh names, around 8.3% of the electorate, have been deleted since the SIR began in November last year, reducing the voter base from 7.66 crore to just over 7.04 crore. Meanwhile, Nabin has accused CM Mamata Banerjee of shielding illegal migrants.

These infiltrators were not only violating the rights of legitimate citizens but also jeopardising the security of the country," he alleged.

Accusing Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of shielding illegal migrants, Nabin alleged that she had provided "protection to infiltrators by helping them obtain fake documents." "Mamata Banerjee rushed to the courts to protect infiltrators in the voter rolls, as they are her party's vote bank. For the sake of these infiltrators, you even approach the courts at midnight. Yet, when women face humiliation, you choose to look the other way," he said.

"Our message to the infiltrators is that the time has now come to drive them out from the soil of Bengal. We must not only drive out infiltrators, but also establish a decisive government that can connect the people here with development," he added.

The BJP chief alleged that several central schemes were not being implemented properly in the state. "Those schemes that Mamata Didi treats with stepmotherly behaviour in implementing here, we will implement them, come what may," he said. Invoking the slogan 'Maa, Mati, Manush' that the TMC had used before coming to power, Nabin alleged that the promise of "Sonar Bangla" had not materialised. "Bengal is looking for a change. People want a real 'paribortan', as the TMC government is corrupt," he said.

According to official data released on Saturday, 63.66 lakh names, around 8.3% of the electorate, have been deleted since the SIR began in November last year, reducing the voter base from 7.66 crore to just over 7.04 crore.

Didi to sit in protest over name removal after SIR

SUBHENDU MAITI @ Kolkata

WEST Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee will hold a sit-in protest demonstration at Esplanade Metro Channel in the heart of the city from March 6 against the final list of the post-Special Intensive Revision (SIR) electoral rolls in the state.

On February 28, the Election Commission of India (ECI) published the final post-SIR list, deleting names of 63.66 lakh voters, including more than 58 lakh absentees, shifted, dead, and duplicate (ASDD) electors during the first phase of the SIR exercise. It removed another 5 lakhs after the completion of the SIR hearings, prompting the TMC led by Mamata to intensify its protest against the removal of such a massive number of electors.

Besides the 63.66 lakh deleted voters, more than 60 lakh electors belonging to the logical discrepancies and unmapped categories, respectively, have been marked as 'under adjudication' on the final list. They are awaiting clearance of the judicial officers to retain their voting rights.

Following the Supreme Court's intervention, judicial officers were tasked with deciding their fate. The 60 lakh voters, including state chief secretary Nandini Chakraborty, minister Tajmul Hossain, and

Richa Ghosh under adjudication in rolls

Richa Ghosh, a member of the World Cup winning women's cricket team, has been placed 'under adjudication' group in the final post-SIR of the electoral rolls in West Bengal. Richa, who hails from Siliguri town in Darjeeling, is one of the more than 60 lakh voters belonging to the 'under adjudication' group.

the party MLA Rafiqur Rahaman, were listed in this 'under adjudication' group.

While speaking to reporters in a press conference held at Trinamool Congress Bhaban\ on Sunday Abhishek Banerjee, national general secretary of the party, announced the programme. "Mamata Banerjee has decided to organise a sit-in demonstration at Metro Channel on March 6. She may also announce programmes for the coming days, the same day," he added.

Abhishek, MP from Diamond Harbour in the South 24 Parganas district, said, "The names of a huge number of legal voters have been removed from the list released illegally by the commission, and this exercise is hostile to the democratic fabric of the country."

People are getting deprived of their voting rights because of the administrative negligence and motivated decision of the national poll body, the TrinamoolCongress leadership alleged.

Common people belonging to mainly minority communities, migrant workers from the state, and financially weaker sections of society have been badly affected, and for this reason the CM would hit the road to intensify protest against the SIR conducted by the commission. The leadership has decided to demand the commission include the deleted voters in the list immediately.

Mamata's Bhowanipore Assembly constituency in south Kolkata recorded huge deletions of 47,111 dead, permanently shifted, absent and bogus voters from the rolls, besides the names of 14,154 others in the same constituency, who are marked as 'under adjudication' and awaiting clearance of the judicial officers.

RANCHI DIARY

MUKESH RANJAN
Our correspondent in Jharkhand
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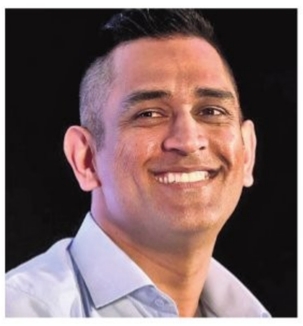
Very soon, BrahMos missile unit in Deoghar

In a major boost to defence manufacturing in eastern India, the Central government has granted in-principle approval for setting up a BrahMos missile manufacturing unit in Jharkhand's Deoghar, Jharkhand. The proposed facility is expected to significantly strengthen the state's defence production ecosystem and position the region as a strategic industrial hub. According to officials, nearly 300 acres of government land have already beenidentified in the Tilona area of Mohanpur block in Deoghar district. The land was reportedly reserved for this purpose around eight years ago, paving the way for faster project execution once formal clearances are completed.



Housing board shoots off notice to Dhoni

Former Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni has been served a notice by Jharkhand State Housing Board over the alleged commercial use of a residential plot allotted in his name. The Board has accused Dhoni of violating allotment norms by permitting commercial activities on a residential property located in the Harmu area of Ranchi. The plot, identified as H-10A, was reportedly allotted strictly for residential purposes. However, authorities claim that a pathology laboratory is currently being operated from the premises, which constitutes a breach of the Board's regulations. The board has sought an explanation for the "violation."

Jolt for BJP in J'khand civic body elections

The BJP has faced a setback in the Jharkhand Municipal Corporation polls, managing to secure only three mayoral seats as results trickled in. The BJP-backed candidates Roshan Khalkho (Ranchi), Sanjay Sardar (Adityapur), and Aruna Shankar (Medininagar) registered victories. The outcome is being seen as a strategic success for Chief Minsiter Hemant Soren, with observers noting that vote division and internal rebellion within the BJP dented its prospects. Compared to the 2018 civic polls, when the BJP had swept all five mayoral seats—Ranchi, Medininagar, Hazaribagh, Giridih and Adityapur—the party was unable to retain its dominance this time.

RAJYA SABHA

RJD holds meet amid Tejashwi candidature buzz

RAMASHANKAR @ Patna

RJD chief Lalu Prasad and the party's national working president Tejashwi Prasad Yadav on Sunday were authorised to make final decisions on the selection of candidates for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections.

Voting will be held for five Rajya Sabha seats in Bihar. With NDA having 202 MLAs, both BJP and JD(U) will easily win two Rajya Sabha seats each, as the RJD is eyeing the fifth seat.

A decision to that effect was taken at the RJD's parliamentary board meeting at the official residence of Tejashwi in Patna. Several senior leaders participated in the meeting. Lalu joined the meeting through video conferencing from New Delhi.

There is speculation in a section of the media that Tejashwi himself might contest the election from Bihar. The name of Hena Shahab, wife of former RJD MP and Siwan strongman, late Mohammad Shahabuddin, is also doing the rounds.

The last date for filing nominations for the five vacant seats in Bihar is March 5, while the elections, if necessary, will be held on March 16.

CoBRA officer & constable injured in anti-Maoist ops

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

TWO security personnel were seriously injured during an anti-Naxal operation in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district on Sunday. CoBRA assistant commandant Ajay Mallick was injured in an IED blast triggered by Maoists in Saranda jungles.

Following the blast, Maoists opened fire, prompting retaliatory firing by security personnel. Head constable Vikram Yadav received bullet injuries during the exchange of fire.

Both were airlifted to a hospital in Ranchi, Chaibasa SP Amit Renu said. "Following the incident, operations have been intensified in Saranda and surrounding areas. Maoists have carried out such cowardly attacks in the past also, resulting in the deaths of many innocent villagers," the SP said. IG (operations) Michael Raj S said, "Several Maoists have been hit with bullets during the exchange of fire which took place after the blast. However, no bodies of Maoists have been recovered so far. Search operation is still on to track the Maoists."

Maoists are now restricted only to Saranda jungles in Jharkhand as they have been flushed out from other pockets of the state. According to an estimate, around 60-65 Maoists are supposed to be hiding in Saranda jungles, where they have planted thousands of IEDs, which pose a challenge for the security forces.

The police launched a joint operation in Kolhan and Saranda jungles of Chaibasa in November 2022. Since then six security personnel have lost their lives while 20 others were critically injured. Nearly 22 civilians have died in IED blasts triggered by Maoists in the jungles of Chaibasa.

The joint operation, conducted by CRPF personnel and police, was launched following intelligence inputs.

15 Naxals lay down arms, hand over AK-47s

EJAZ KAISER @ Raipiur

All 15 active cadres of the Balangir-Bargarh-Mahasamund (BBM) division of CPI (Maoist) surrendered to authorities in Chhattisgarh's Mahasamund district on Saturday. State Home Minister Vijay Sharma confirmed the development, noting that the formal rehabilitation process is scheduled to be completed by Sunday.

The group includes a diverse demographic in leadership ranking, with nine women among the surrendered. While the surrender took place in Mahasamund, 14 of the individuals were originally from the Bastar region. The cadres turned in a substantial cache of high-grade weaponry, including three AK-47 rifles, two SLRs, two INSAS rifles and three .303 rifles, the home minister stated.

The surrender is particularly notable for the seniority of the defectors. Security forces maintain a dual-track strategy.

U'khand BJP prepares poll strategy to oust Cong from 23 'difficult' seats

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

SETTING its sight on an unprecedented third consecutive term, the ruling BJP in Uttarakhand has launched a sophisticated, multi-layered strategy to breach "impregnable" opposition fortresses that have eluded the party for over two decades.

With the 2027 Assembly elections on the horizon, the saffron party has identified 23 "high-priority" seats. These include constituencies where the party either lost by razor-thin margins in 2022 or has failed to open its account since the state's inception. To eliminate guesswork, the organisation has institutionalised a rigorous vetting process. "We have identified 23 seats where the margin of victory or defeat was minimal," said Mahendra Bhatt, BJP state president.

"The strategy involves five levels of ground surveys. One is complete; two more are scheduled for March-April, followed by a state-level assessment and a final independent audit by the central leadership," he added.

The biggest challenge lies in Chakrata. Despite fielding various candidates between 2002

and 2022, the BJP has never tasted victory here. The seat remains a personal fiefdom of Congress veteran Pritam Singh. Even during the 2017 "Modi wave," the BJP fell short by 1,543 votes. Similarly, in Haridwar, the Manglore and Piran Kaliyar seats remain elusive. Manglore has swung between the BSP and Congress for 25 years, while the Muslim-dominated Piran Kaliyar has consistently backed Congress's Furkan Ahmed since 2012, resisting all attempts at religious polarisation.

In the Kumaon division, Dharchula stands as a symbol of resistance. The BJP has never won a general assembly election here. Even in the 2014 by-election, the party could not unseat Congress.

J'khand to use AI cameras for rogue elephants

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

IN a first for Jharkhand, the forest department is set to introduce AI-powered thermal cameras in Jamshedpur to address man-elephant conflict.

Apart from tracking elephant movement, the advanced system will also aid in the early detection of forest fires. The technology will be deployed in the vulnerable stretches of Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary, as well as in the Chandil and Chakulia ranges under the Jamshedpur Forest Division, areas frequently affected by elephant intrusions.

According to officials, the cameras will maintain round-the-clock surveillance of elephant movement. Explaining the mechanism, Jamshedpur Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Saba Alam Ansari said, "The AI software will analyse the captured data and send real-time alerts to the control room. Upon receiving the alert, forest personnel will inform the Quick Response Team (QRT), which will rush to the location, alert nearby villagers, and drive the elephants back into the forest."

JUMBO TECH

27 AI thermal cameras to be installed in Dalma, Chandil, Chakulia

EACH COVERS 6-KM RADIUS WITH 360° ROTATION

- AI to send real-time elephant movement alerts
- QRTs to warn villagers, drive herds back
- System to detect fires via heat, smoke signals

15 days to go for rollout; tech imported from Sweden

The AI system is designed to specifically identify elephant movement, filtering out signals from other wildlife or humans to avoid false alarms, he added. According to the DFO, "A total of 27 AI-powered thermal cameras will be installed in Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary, Chandil, and Chakulia ranges and will be expanded further to other divisions vulnerable to elephant attacks, also, depending on the successful implementation of the project," said the DFO. Each of the cameras can cover a radius of 6 km by rotating 360 degrees, he added.

In addition to that, this early warning mechanism is expected to help identify fires at a nascent stage. The advanced thermal imaging system will be capable of instantly detecting smoke and unusual heat signatures during a forest fire, enabling rapid response by ground staff.

"This early warning mechanism is expected to help identify fires at a nascent stage, allowing forest personnel to reach the site promptly and contain the blaze before it spreads," said the DFO. The cameras will be installed and become operational within the next 15 days, he added. Before installing the cameras, a team of experts from Coimbatore is conducting the survey in the area. The technology has been imported from Sweden.

Officials said cameras will be installed in phases; the first phase will cover Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary, followed by expansion to Chandil and the Chakulia Range in East Singhbhum.

MP to hold first agri cabinet meet in tribal area, farmer sops on the anvil

ANURAAG SINGH @ Bhopal

A slew of key pro-farmer decisions will be taken at the agriculture cabinet meeting of the Dr Mohan Yadav government in the tribal-dominated Barwani district on Monday.

The meeting in the south-western MP district's Nagalwadi village will be the first agriculture cabinet meeting of the state government this year. Importantly, the year 2026-27 has been dedicated by the government as 'Krishak Kalyan Varsh' (Farmer Welfare Year).

According to the state government's official statement, the entire council of ministers will spend the day in the same village, where a dialogue with intellectuals and farmers will also be held, besides an exhibition focussed on agriculture and tribal welfare.

Following the agriculture

cabinet meeting, the CM will interact with farmers and intellectuals. During the dialogue, the government's initiatives and schemes for the welfare of the state and its farmers will be shared, while suggestions, expectations, and views of farmers and intellectuals regarding regional development will also be gathered. An exhibition showcasing tribal development and agriculture-based growth will be set up at the venue.

Housing a 6000-strong population, Nagalwadi is a predominantly tribal village, where the 800-year-old Bhilat Dev Temple is also located. The village holds a special significance in the faith and traditions of the tribal community. After the meeting, the CM Dr Mohan Yadav, along with his council of ministers, will offer prayers at the ancient temple.

Importantly, the state government is focussing on agriculture and allied activities in 2026-27. In the recent state budget, a massive ₹1.15 lakh crore-plus was allocated for the agriculture and farmers' welfare sector.

During the state cabinet meeting earlier this week, the government had allocated ₹10,500 crore for continuing five major agriculture and related schemes.

22 killed
after a military plane carrying 18 tonnes of banknotes crashed near Bolivia's capital

GLOBAL WEATHER

LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • LS: Light Snow • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	21	1	SNY	Los Angeles	20	12	SNY
Colombo	28	24	SNY	Melbourne	26	15	LC
Dhaka	31	19	SNY	Moscow	4	2	SNY
Dubai	26	21	SNY	New York	7	2	SNY
Houston	31	19	TDS	Singapore	28	25	TDS
Istanbul	33	21	SNY	Toronto	1	-5	SNY
London	13	9	SNY	Washington	3	-2	SNY

World calls for urgent calm on Iran

Top diplomats from 27 European Union nations hold emergency meeting to discuss the situation and the bloc's next steps

Iranians show a mix of shock, grief and joy over Khamenei's death; travellers stranded after multiple nations shut their skies

Israel urges uprising; Iran vows revenge

JERUSALEM: Israel urged Iranians to rise up and topple their government following the killing of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a joint US-Israeli strike on Tehran. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called it a once-in-a-generation chance to "free" Iran, echoing US President Donald Trump's appeal to seize control. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian termed the strike an open declaration of war and vowed revenge, while senior official Ali Larijani warned of unprecedented retaliation against Israel and the US.

3 US troops killed in Iran operation

WASHINGTON: Three US service members were killed and five seriously wounded during operations against Iran, US Central Command said Sunday, marking Washington's first announced casualties. Air and naval forces, alongside Israel, continued strikes aimed at crippling Iran's military capacity. Iran launched missiles at Israel and US bases, and claimed to have hit the USS Abraham Lincoln — but the US military said the carrier was not struck and fighting continues.

Putin condemns killing of Iran leader

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin condemned the killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, calling it a cynical violation of morality and international law. In a message to President Masoud Pezeshkian, he conveyed condolences and praised Khamenei's role in strengthening Russia–Iran ties. Moscow denounced political assassinations and urged immediate de-escalation and a return to diplomacy. Russia and Iran signed a strategic partnership treaty in 2025, deepening cooperation, including in military matters.

Smoke rises up after a strike in Tehran, Iran | AP

WAR WATCH

BRUSSELS

WORLD leaders urged peace and a return to talks as the military strikes by the United States and Israel on Iran raised concerns about whether the violence could spread across the region and tensions rose with Iran vowing devastating blows after the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

A massive explosion rocked the Iranian capital on Sunday morning as the Israeli military said it was targeting the "heart" of the city after stating it cleared the path to Tehran the day before. Meanwhile, Iran pressed on with its retaliation campaign: Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain said they intercepted a barrage of missiles.

Oman, which served as an interlocutor between Tehran and Washington in recent nuclear talks, said an oil tanker in the strategic Strait of Hormuz came under attack and its port at Duqm, used by the US Navy as a logistical hub and capable of hosting aircraft carriers, was targeted in a drone attack.

The demise of Khamenei, who had no designated successor, will likely throw Iran's future into uncertainty and exacerbate already growing concerns of a broader conflict.

Fears about the conflict spreading were amplified on Sunday, when British Defense Minister John Healey said Iranian missile and drone strikes came within a few hundred meters of a group of 300 British military personnel in Bahrain, and that two missiles were even fired in the direction of Cyprus, where the UK has bases.

"We don't believe they were targeted at Cyprus, but nevertheless, it's an example of how there is a very real and rising threat from a regime that is lashing out widely across the region, and that requires us to act," Healey told *Sky News*. He said British planes will intercept any Iranian drones and missiles they see.

Strikes on Iran disrupted flights across the Middle East Saturday, with several countries closing airspace and key transit hubs affected. Thousands of travellers were stranded or diverted after multiple nations shut their skies, FlightRadar24 said.

Top diplomats from the 27 European Union nations are holding an emergency meeting Sunday to discuss the situation around Iran and the next steps for the bloc. Pope Leo XIV said Sunday he was "profoundly concerned" about the US and Israeli strikes on Iran and urged both sides to "stop the spiral of violence before it becomes an irreparable abyss." *AP*

US consulate in Karachi attacked, 22 dead in Pak clash

KARACHI

VIOLENT clashes between protesters and security forces in Pakistan's port city of Karachi and in the country's north on Sunday left at least 22 people dead and more than 120 others injured as pro-Iran demonstrators attempted to storm the US Consulate, authorities said.

In the north of the country, demonstrators also attacked UN and government offices.

The violence came after the United States and Israel attacked Iran, killing its Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Police and officials at a hospital in Karachi said that at least 50 people were also wounded in the clashes and some of them were in critical condition.

President Asif Ali Zardari expressed his "profound sorrow over the martyrdom" of Khamenei" and conveyed his condolences to Iran, according to his office. He said: "Pakistan stands with the Iranian nation in this moment of grief and shares in their loss."

Summaiya Syed Tariq, a police surgeon at the city's main government hospital, confirmed six bodies and multiple injured people were brought to the facility. However, she said the death toll rose to 10 after four critically wounded people died.

Twelve people were killed and over 80 wounded in clashes with police in the northern Gilgit-Baltistan region when thousands of Shiite protesters angered by US and Israeli strikes on Iran attacked the offices of the UN Military Observer Group and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), local police official Asghar Ali said.

Firefighters pour water on burning car, set on fire by protestors, close to the US Consulate in Karachi in Pakistan | AP

The US Embassy in Pakistan said in a post on X that it was monitoring reports of ongoing demonstrations at the US Consulates General in Karachi and Lahore, as well as calls for additional protests at the US Embassy in Islamabad and the Consulate General in Peshawar. It advised US citizens in Pakistan to monitor local news, stay aware of their surroundings, avoid large crowds and keep their travel registration with the US government up to date. *AP*

Afghan Taliban soldiers on Torkham border crossing with Pakistan in Afghanistan | AP

Kabul says it thwarted Pak's bid to strike Bagram

KABUL

AFGHANISTAN thwarted attempted airstrikes on Bagram Air Base, the former US military base north of Kabul, authorities said Sunday, while cross-border fighting between Pakistan and Afghanistan stretched into a fourth day.

The fighting has been the most severe between the neighbors for years, with Pakistan declaring that it's in "open war" with Afghanistan. The conflict has alarmed the international community, particularly as the area is one where other militant organisations, including al-Qaida and the Islamic State group, still have a presence and have been trying to resurface. Pakistan accuses Afghanistan's Taliban government of harboring militant groups that stage attacks against it and also of allying with its archrival India.

On Sunday, the police headquarters of Parwan province, where Bagram is located, said in a statement that several Pakistani military jets had entered Afghan airspace "and attempted to bomb Bagram Air Base" at around 5am. Afghan forces said they repelled the attack using air defence systems. Pakistan gave no immediate response to Kabul's claim of attempted airstrikes on Bagram or the ongoing clashes.

Bagram was the United States' largest military base in Afghanistan. It was taken over by the Taliban as they swept across the country and took control in the wake of the chaotic US withdrawal from the country in 2021. Last year, Trump suggested he wanted to reestablish a US presence at the base. *AP*

After Khamenei, Iran confronts an uncertain political future

DUBAI

AYATOLLAH Ali Khamenei, who assembled theocratic power in Iran over the decades as its supreme leader and sought to turn it into a regional powerhouse, bringing it into confrontation with Israel and the United States over its nuclear programme while crushing democracy protesters at home, has died. He was 86. Iranian state media reported the death early Sunday, after a major attack launched by Israel and the United States. US President Donald Trump said hours earlier that Khamenei had been killed in the joint operation.

Khamenei dramatically remolded the Islamic Republic since he took the reins after the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1989. Khomeini was the fiery, charismatic ideologue who led the overthrow of the shah and installed rule by Shiite Muslim clerics tasked with spreading religious purity. It fell to Khamenei, a stodgier figure with weaker religious credentials and a leaden demeanor, to turn that revolutionary vision into a state establishment.

He ended up ruling far longer than Khomeini. He greatly expanded the Shiite clerical class and built the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard into the most important body underpinning his rule. The Guard became a military and business behemoth, the country's most elite force and head of its ballistic missile arsenal, with hands across Iran's economic sectors. But the strains became harder to contain. Political repression and the faltering economy fueled successively bigger waves of mass protests. Khamenei's death raises questions about the future of the Islamic Republic. *AP*

CARTEL VIOLENCE

Mexico returns El Mencho's body to his kin

MEXICO CITY

MEXICAN authorities returned the body of Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes, known as "El Mencho," to his family after he was killed by the Mexican army last week, officials said on Saturday. In a brief note on X, the Attorney General's Office said that it handed over the body of El Mencho after completing all the necessary procedural protocols.

"Genetic tests were carried out to confirm that there were indeed blood ties between the person who requested the release and the deceased," the organ said. The killing of the country's most powerful drug lord was met with a wave of retaliatory violence in some 20 states. More than 70 people were killed. The violence has fueled fears that the bloodshed could hurt tourism ahead of the FIFA World Cup later this year.

"I don't think handing over the body to the family is going to recreate the havoc," said David Mora, a senior analyst and Mexico expert at global think tank International Crisis Group. "The violence that is going to come next is going to play out differently," Mora added, pointing to the reorganisation of the cartel following the decapitation of its leader and potential turf wars between smaller criminal groups. The US State Department had offered a reward of up to $15 million for information leading to the arrest of El Mencho. *AP*

Ex-UN envoy Chatterjee to head Global Neighbours

BEIJING

VETERAN UN diplomat of Indian origin Siddharth Chatterjee has been appointed as CEO of Global Neighbours, a Vienna-based think tank upon his retirement as UN Resident Coordinator in China.

Chatterjee, 62, retired as UN Resident Coordinator in China on Sunday. Chatterjee's appointment to head 26 UN offices in China in 2021 made headlines as it came in the midst of the India-China tensions over the eastern Ladakh standoff.

During his tenure in China, he became a major draw for Chinese, Indian and global media making waves with his high-intensity fitness regime and yoga exercises. An alumnus of India's National Defence Academy, Pune, Chatterjee served in the Indian Army before joining the UN and was decorated for gallantry in 1995. He is married to Ban Hyun-Hee, the daughter of former UN Secretary General Ban-Ki moon from South Korea who is currently Chief of Public Partnerships at UNICEF China.

A press release issued by the Global Neighbours said Chatterjee has been appointed as its CEO effective from March 2.

Global Neighbours is a Vienna-based think tank founded in 2022 by entrepreneur Jovanka Porsche, former Austrian chancellor Christian Kern and former German vice chancellor Philipp Rösler. It aims to foster fact-based dialogue between Europe, Asia and other regions across business, politics and society. *PTI*

ASIA MATTERS

SINGAPORE

15,000 KG OF RICE TO BE DISTRIBUTED

Under an initiative launched by Bukit Canberra Hawker Centre, a total of 15,000 kg of rice will be distributed to 15 charity groups, *The Straits Times* reported. The hawker centre is run by Canopy Hawkers Group, a subsidiary of Food Canopy. Health Minister Ong Ye Kung, who is also adviser to Sembawang GRC Grassroots Organisations, attended the event. "We hope to nourish both bodies and hearts, and inspire more businesses and individuals to come together to support those in need," an official was quoted as saying by Straits Times.

MALAYSIA

ONLINE SCAMS COST $542 MILLION

Online scams have cost the country an estimated total loss of around USD 542 million, according to a recent report by the Indonesian Anti-Slander Society (Mafindo) quoted by Jakarta Post. The schemes ranged from fraudulent investment and lottery, fake job offers, online marketplace frauds, and love scams, the daily reported.

THAILAND

GOVT ISSUES HEATSTROKE WARNING

With temperatures expected to soar in the coming days, the government has issued a heatstroke warning. As per a *Bangkok Post* report, people, particularly vulnerable groups, those with chronic illnesses and outdoor workers, are being urged to take precautions. The temperatures are forecast to rise above last year's levels, the report said. Temperatures could reach 42-43 degrees Celsius in high-risk areas, including the provinces of Mae Hong Son, Lampang and Tak, the report quoted Ayrin Phanrit, deputy government spokeswoman, as saying.

An Austin police officer guards the scene on West 6th Street at West Avenue after a shooting in Austin | AP

Shooting at bar in Austin leaves 3 dead

AUSTIN

THREE people were killed, including the alleged gunman, and 14 others were wounded in a shooting early Sunday at a popular bar in the Texas capital of Austin, police said.

Austin Police Chief Lisa Davis said a man driving an SUV drove near the bar, put the vehicle's flashers on, pulled down his window and began shooting with a pistol, striking patrons on the bar patio and in front of the bar.

The suspect then parked the vehicle, got out of his car armed with a rifle, and began shooting at people who passed by, Davis said. At that point, officers encountered the suspect and shot him. Acting Special Agent in Charge Alex Doran of the FBI San Antonio Field Office said the shooting was "potentially" an act of terrorism.

"There were indicators that on the subject and in his vehicle that indicate potential nexus to terrorism. Again, it's still too early to make a determination on that," Doran said. *AP*

INFLATION

Algerians struggle to afford Ramzan feasts as prices rise

ALGIERS

AS Algerians fast, pray and gather for the holy month of Ramzan, a worry lurks in many minds: how to afford the holiday feasts this year.

In addition to its religious significance for billions of Muslims, Ramzan also means tables laden with rich and varied meals eaten after the muezzin's call to break the fast at sunset.

Today, these feasts come at a cost beyond the reach of many Algerians, whose purchasing power has declined in recent years despite Algeria's gas and oil riches, pushing more and more people into poverty.

Food prices have soared, and tensions at marketplaces now occasionally erupt into violence. After Algeria was convulsed by nationwide protests in 2019, the government became concerned about broader social unrest and promised economic aid. "In the 1970s, we didn't earn much, but we could stock up for Ramzan and afford fresh meat, fruit, and vegetables," Ahmed Messai, a retired railway worker said.

On the ground floor of the market, the beating heart of commercial life in the Algerian capital, merchants' stalls are well stocked with fruit and vegetables, displayed with enticing artistry. *AP*

People stock up on food at a market in Algeria, during the month of Ramadan | AP

1.86% increase in power consumption in the country to 132.99 billion units in February from 130.56 BU a year ago, according to govt data

What new MF classifications mean for you

Experts say nothing much has changed for investors, portfolio allocation definitions have become more uniform now

BEN KOCHUVEEDAN @ Mumbai

THE Securities and Exchange Board (Sebi) has, in a circular, revamped framework for classification of mutual fund schemes, introducing a new life cycle funds category and scrapping the existing solution-oriented schemes segment with a view to ensuring "true-to-label" positioning of the schemes, curbing exaggerated return claims and enhancing uniformity and investor protection.

Under the revised structure, MF schemes are broadly classified into five main categories— equity, debt, hybrid, life-cycle and other schemes—along with fund of fund schemes and passive schemes such as index funds and exchange-traded funds.

Fund managers and industry experts don't see much impact of the new rules on investments, including those schemes of funds banned by the regulator. A Balasubramanian, chief executive of Aditya Birla Sun Life Mutual Fund and a former chairman of the Association of Mutual Funds (Amfi), says the impact on investors is expected to be minimal.

For investors, there is nothing significant that changes immediately with the new norms. From a money management point of view, portfolio allocation definitions become more uniform now. That is the main difference," he says adding Sebi has given fund houses up to six months to align portfolios and reposition their schemes wherever required. In case of overlapping schemes, some mergers may take place.

"A few schemes here and

there may get merged. Overall, it should not cause major inconvenience either to investors or to the industry," he says.

For example, if a fund house runs two similar sectoral schemes with overlapping mandates, it may consolidate them into one. For an investor holding units in one of the merged schemes, the units will typically get mapped into the surviving scheme without requiring fresh action.

On the impact of now banned solution-oriented schemes, another industry veteran says earlier, retirement funds and children's funds were run as separate solution-oriented categories. With the introduction of more structured age-based allocation categories, inflows into some older formats may be restricted.

As per him, certain existing schemes may be grandfathered, meaning existing investors can continue, but fresh inflows could be stopped after a transition period. "Time has been given for implementation. In some cases, inflows may be stopped. But existing investors are protected," he says.

On the changes in sectoral and thematic funds, he says earlier, there were exposure caps within sector definitions. For example, limits existed on how much a fund could allocate to financial sector entities as a whole, and sometimes within sub-segments. But under the new framework, a mutual fund can launch a scheme investing exclusively in a single sector, such as financial services, subject to single-security limits. As per norms, exposure to a single security cannot exceed 12 per cent of the scheme's assets.

"This gives flexibility. Earlier, due to sector caps, fund managers sometimes had to invest in other sectors even if opportunities were better in one sector. Now, exclusive sector funds can be structured more clearly," he says.

IN CONVERSATION

MUKUNDAN MENON
Managing director, Voltas Limited

'Air conditioner prices to go up by 5-15%, sales likely to grow by 20%'

A sharp rise in copper prices is all set to make cooling an expensive affair this year. To combat this and currency fluctuations amid a weakening rupee, most AC brands are expected to go price hike of between 5 and 15%, said **Mukundan Menon**, managing director, Voltas Limited. In an exclusive interaction with **Arshad Khan**, Menon said Voltas, a Tata Group company, is eyeing a growth of 20% this year while the AC market overall may grow at around 15-20%. The MD also wants to increase Voltas presence in the international market and expects to remain the fastest-growing brand in the refrigerator and washing machine market. Edited **excerpts:**

2025 was a tough year for the AC market. Do you expect a revival in demand this season?
Year 2024 was a superb year due to the long extended summer. However, 2025 was a terrible season for the industry as AC sales fell by 25% as summer was short and the monsoon arrived early. Going forward in the 2026 season, we expect the growth will be there because the base is already low and ACs have now become more like a necessity than a luxury. Currently, the AC market is at 15 million units a year. This year the industry is likely to grow 15-20% while we at Voltas are expecting to grow upward of 20%.

What has been the impact of the GST cut on demand...
There was a reduction of GST from 28% to 18% in September, which gave a consumer benefit of roughly 7.8% and we passed it completely on to them. However, late September and Q3FY26 are not the season when consumers buy ACs or refrigerators. So essentially, we didn't see any great traction because of that. This summer we will get to know the impact of the GST cut on demand. However, parallely what has happened is that there has been an energy label change and prices of raw material have gone up. On January 1, we have taken a price revision.

Going forward in the 2026 season, we expect the growth will be there because the base is already low and ACs have now become more like a necessity than a luxury. Currently, the AC market is at 15 million units per year

To what extent will prices rise further due to rise in copper prices?
AC prices may further rise anywhere between 5% and 15% this year due to a sharp rise in copper prices and depreciation of rupee. In ACs, copper is one of the most important used raw materials and its prices in the international market have gone up from $8,000 per tonne to $12,000-13,000 per tonne. As copper is imported from Vietnam and a few other places, we have to make the payment in dollars. For other imported items, the payment is also made in dollars and given the weakness of the rupee against the dollar, we will have to adjust our prices.

In recent years, the AC market has become highly competitive. How are you securing your turf amid rising competition from Japanese, Korean and other domestic players?
We are the market leader with 18% share. In recent years, the competition has increased with foreign brands becoming very aggressive. So we are often asked how we are protecting our share?

To answer this, I can say we are doing many things right. First, we have a very strong distribution network. With 30,000 counters, we are able to reach nationwide. Second, our wide product portfolio helps us to reach everyone. We have products for entry level customer, tech-savvy premium customer and performance-oriented consumers who want very good cooling in peak summer. And then, we understand the Indian market very well because for 70 years we've been doing this. The trust people have on Tata brand is huge.

How is Voltas doing in fridge and washing machine category? Are you looking to enhance presence in export market?
Currently, we do a very small quantity of exports in Canada and a little bit to the Middle East. We want to increase exports significantly. India has to become an export hub and we are keen not to miss this. An increase is a natural hedge against a weak rupee.

MONEY-WISE

MACROS, MICROS & ART OF BIDING TIME

FINANCIAL ADVICE
ASHOK KUMAR
Head of LKW-India.
He can be reached at
ceolotus@hotmail.com
(Views expressed here are personal)

ON a recent podcast, I touched upon the broad Macros and Micros of the Market as well as the Art of Biding Time in the market. Am sharing some of the key points that I made in this column.

On the Macro front, conflicts remain on the boil in different parts of the world be it between Russia and Ukraine, Iran and Israel, India and Pakistan besides China and Taiwan. Adding to the resultant uncertainty is the even bigger uncertainty around how sacrosanct trade deals made with the USA are anymore. The recent US Supreme Court verdict that upturns the earlier tariffs has led to countries pausing deal closures.

While the Indo-US deal is thus too early to call, the Indo-EU deal is a definite positive for the Indian economy and in a way, lessens the overhang that has existed over the Indian equity market ever since the tariff circus commenced.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the joker in the pack. While everyone seems to agree that itwould be a game changer, few are able to quantify its impact and the sectors that it will hit hardest as well as the ones likelier to be less impacted. It thus merits close monitoring and studying before initiating any portfolio changes based on it.

On the micros front, the time correction has now run for almost 18 months and the relative

valuation of the broad market, though still not in an undervalued zone, is better than what it was 12-15 months ago. It is thus that every round of profit booking is followed by a wave of buying and in this context, one must appreciate the role of Hybrid Funds in which money currently parked in Debt and other Assets Classes can be deployed into Equity. This is providing an unseen Safety Net to equity investors.

Then, the fact that the Indian indices, though stalled, have not gone into a free fall inspite of the multiple conflicts mentioned earlier and particularly the Indo-Pak 4 day war triggered by a terrorist attack suggests that at declines, the Indian markets turn more attractive and that leads to buying spurts which send the indices back to where they fell from. This scenario has played out several times over and unless there is some catastrophic event that takes place, chances are that the breakout might eventually be on the upside.

Finally, one must appreciate that Equity is a non-linear asset and not for those who fear negative returns. Downswings are inevitable as part of every cycle and one must live through it to eventually reap rewards. One can of course consider hedging with Gold while the more adventurous with higher risk appetite can even speculate with Silver.

As I have mentioned before, biding Time is a tested Strategy I've adopted over three and a half decadesand it has inevitably worked.

My strategy is no different this time too. Of course, there is no one approach or style that suits all investors and one would do well to seek professional advise to identify and adopt the strategy best suited to them.

MONEY MATTERS

INVESTING LESSONS AMIDST VOLATILE TIMES

FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE
RAJAS KELKAR
(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

THE surge in conflict in the Middle East put financial markets in a tizzy. Investors, big or small, would look for a quick end to this escalated situation. Financial markets don't like uncertainty. Amidst the flow of conflict news, Berkshire Hathaway, a company spearheaded by legendary American investor Warren Buffett, witnessed history. For the first time, Greg Abel, the company's new chief executive officer, wrote the shareholders' letter. Warren Buffett last year announced that he would no longer write them.

The letter maintains the same style and spirit of writing about Berkshire values, investment philosophies and disclosures. The idea is to maintain continuity in communication with shareholders. The inadvertent outcome is a masterclass in personal finance. A simple explanation of ways to picking stocks. Conversations in the Berkshire documents are never about short-term. They are always about riding through cycles over decades once you make those investments. The recent developments may not have significance in the situation.

Invest in businesses you understand

Berkshire continues to hold a major chunk of cash on balance sheet. The non-controlling investments are concentrated in a few companies like Apple, American Express, Coca-Cola, and Moody's. These are businesses understood very well. They are companies with durable advantages (market leadership and pricing power) and long-term economic prospects.

Define your happy zone

Identify the criteria that define investment zone. The letter gives an analogy related to American football. It is enough to know once you identify businesses you are comfortable with, you can pick companies. If it's just an asset class, you make that allocation based on risk profile and stay patient. Your money needs time to compound.

The power of dry powder

The letter highlights the importance of holding cash to seize the right opportunities. Since markets move in cycles, you must have cash to benefit from a downcycle. At the same time, you must have adequate cash holdings to meet your monthly obligations in times of difficulty. As a company, Berkshire has over $370 billion in cash and US treasury holdings. It is required to act when thers are fearful, the letter said.

EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION

Focus on profit growth

The headline net profit figures announced could be misleading. You may want to focus more on operating performance of a business and know more about ability to consistently grow profits in future. If the business deviates from the focus on profit growth, you may want to step back and assess the situation. If the management exudes adequate confidence, you may not worry too much about short-term fluctuations in profits.

Integrity matters

Berkshire believes in integrity of management as reputation is an earned asset and cannot be claimed. The company identifies high integrity managements and leaders who act like owners. They lead their business to growth and acknowledge failures too. They rectify mistakes decisively to bring the business back on the path of growth.

What does it mean to you

Investing is all about keeping a focus on the downside risk and managing it with small steps. The principle is simple. If you are looking to multiply your wealth, you need to have patience, invest regularly and allocate money to equity assets based on your long-term goals. If you are closer to your goals, ensure you focus on protecting your money and reducing your exposure to risky asset classes. As you grow your wealth, it is hard to achieve outperformance. Your priority moves from growing money to protecting your investment. The Berkshire letter to shareholders is an excellent talking point to discuss with your financial advisor.

Feb GST revenues rise 8.1% to ₹1.83L cr

PUSHPITA DEY @ New Delhi

TOTAL gross GST revenue collected in February rose by 8.1% to ₹1.83 lakh crore as against the ₹1.69 lakh crore collected in November last year. However, there has been a slight dip in the collection as compared to January when the gross revenue stood at ₹1.93 lakh crore, due to higher mop-up from imports.

After accounting for refunds, total net GST revenue for the month stood at ₹1.61 lakh crore, 7.9% rise over ₹1.49 lakh crore collected in the same month of the previous year. A closer look at the components reveals the gross domestic revenue has gone up by 5.3% in February to ₹1.35 lakh crore, which stood at ₹1.28 lakh crore in February 2025. This domestic collection consisted of ₹37,473 crore in CGST, ₹45,900 crore in SGST, and ₹52,399 crore in IGST. In contrast, revenue from imports showed robust growth, with gross import revenue (IGST) reaching ₹47,837 crore, 17.2% rise over ₹40,821 crore collected in February 2025.

The net cess revenue stood at ₹5063 crore this month. "There has been a consumption uptick that has more than compensated for the rate reductions, leading to an 8% increase in monthly collections. In terms of absolute numbers, the collections, which were inching toward ₹2 lakh crore a month, the rate reductions have pulled it back and it will take some time to reach that mark," said MS Mani, Partner, Deloitte India. While states like Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Sikkim have shown double-digit growth in revenue, there has been a considerable fall in collection from the states like Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha. The fall in revenue in is highest in Jharkhand, where it fell by 44%. Maharashtra made the largest contribution with ₹10,286 crore before SGST settlement, followed by Karnataka and Gujarat.

"The continued dominance of Maharashtra, followed by Karnataka and Gujarat, underscores the resilience of major industrial and services hubs. Overall, the data reflects calibrated growth, improved compliance efficiency, and sustained formalisation rather than one-off volatility," said Manoj Mishra, Partner and Tax Controversy Management Leader, Grant Thornton Bharat.

ON THE RISE

SOURCE	FEB-25 (₹CR)	FEB-26 (₹CR)
CGST	35,204	37,473
SGST	43,704	45,900
IGST	90,870	100,236
Total gross GST	169,779	183,609
Total refund	20,500	22,595
Total net GST	149,278	161,014
Net cess	13,481	5,063

NET MOP-UP AT ₹1.61L CR
After deducting refunds, net GST revenue for the month stood at ₹1.61 lakh cr, a 7.9% YoY rise

West Asia crisis likely to trigger sell-off in market

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

DOMESTIC equity market is likely to open gap-down on Monday due to a full-blown crisis in the Middle East after US and Israeli forces targeted key Iranian sites over the weekend.

The conflict is likely to bring additional pain to investors as India's equity market continues to reel under selling pressure with benchmark indices — NSE Nifty50 and BSE Sensex — falling up to 2.5% during the trading week ending Friday (Feb 27).

The operation, which US officials described as a preemptive measure against Iran's nuclear advancements, resulted in confirmed death of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Iran swiftly responded with a barrage of ballistic missiles aimed at Israeli cities and Middle East hubs such as Dubai, Kuwait and Bahrain.

The attacks have led to a sharp rise in crude prices and have fueled fears of a broader conflict that could choke the Strait of Hormuz through which nearly 20% of the world's crude oil flows daily. For India, this is a big negative as high crude increases inflation risk and higher inflation pushes bond yields up. A rising yields compress equity multiples, which in turn leads to investors ditching equities. Market experts believe investors will rush toward safe havens, bolstering demand for gold.

Strait of Hormuz closure to affect LPG supplies

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

ANY further escalation that leads to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz could disrupt India's energy supplies, affecting not only crude oil but also LPG imports. The route, accounts for 20% of the world's crude supply, is a major chokepoint.

For India, the dependence is acute in case of LPG. About 80-85% of India's LPG imports transit via the Strait of Hormuz from Gulf suppliers. Moreover, unlike crude oil, India doesn't maintain strategic LPG reserves in the country; therefore, any disruption can have a major impact. As per commodity market analytics firm Kpler, the Strait of Hormuz is a major conduit for India's energy supplies, with around 85% of LPG supply routed through it.

PICS: DEBADATTA MALLICK

Sanju comes to the fore

TURNING POINTS

When India took the field against South Africa last Sunday, Sanju Samson was nowhere in scheme of the things. A week later Samson played the knock of his life to keep India alive.

Cometh the hour, cometh the man

Jasprit Bumrah showed why he is a game-changer. WI were cruising through with Roston Chase and Shimron Hetmyer starting a counter-attack. Bumrah deceived both in the same over & gave India the much-needed breather.

Shai of rhythm in Powerplay

If winning the toss was crucial, keeping WI in check during powerplay was vital. India did that with Shai Hope not getting the momentum needed. And eventually, the WI skipper (32 from 33 balls) fell to mystery spinner Varun.

SAMSON'S GALAXY: INDIA IN SEMIS

Opener from Kerala takes the spotlight by slamming unbeaten 97, helping co-hosts overcome West Indies in Supers 8s clash at Kolkata in the process

FIROZ MIRZA @ Kolkata

SANJU Samson had a forgettable build-up to the T20 World Cup as he struggled for runs forcing the team management to bench him as India started their campaign with a win over USA at the Wankhede Stadium in the first week of February.

With Sanju's last half-century coming against a weaker opponent, Oman way back in September 2025 during the T20 Asia Cup, the Kerala wicket-keeper-batter fell off the radar and was left to serve drinks to his teammates during the tournament. As luck would have it, destructive opener Abhishek Sharma, who has been key to India's success in the last one year, failed to open his account in the first two matches and then had a severe stomach infection ahead of the Namibia match giving Sanju a chance to return to the playing XI. But once Abhishek came back to the side, Sanju was sidelined again. A duck for the Punjab batter in the next match and a heavy loss against South Africa in the first Super Eights game meant Sanju was back in the reckoning for the next contest against Zimbabwe.

The 31-year-old opened the batting scoring a quickfire 15-ball 24 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, his new home for the upcoming Indian Premier League season. The stint in the middle in Chennai against turned out to be a game-changer for Sanju as he entered the must-win match against West Indies here at the Eden Gardens on Sunday high on confidence. Chasing a formidable target of 196, India lost Abhishek and Ishan Kishan early but that did not deter Sanju, who scored runs freely ensuring the match remained under the reigning champions' reach. He along with captain Suryakumar Yadav added 58 runs for the third wicket and then stitched together a 42-run partnership with Tilak Varma to take the game deep. Varma also departed thanks to a brilliant catch by Shimron Hetmyer at mid-off, off the bowling of Jason Holder.

Sanju, however, stood firm and looked like a man on a mission. The arrival of Hardik Pandya only worked in India's favour as he played a perfect foil to Sanju until that shot to extra cover off Shamar Joseph with India still 17 runs away from the target. That brought in Shivam Dube to the crease. He hit two fours in the over to bring down the equation to 7 off the last six balls. Deservingly Sanju hit the six off the first ball of the last over to tie the match and hit the next ball for a four to remain unbeaten on 97. As soon as he hit the winnings, he resigned on the ground realising fully what he has done for the team and himself.

The win also meant India successfully chased their highest-ever target in the tournament. The previous best was 173 runs against South Africa in the 2014 edition. Earlier, none of the West Indies batters went past fifty but all of them except their captain Shai Hope scored runs with a strike rate of more than 150. That collective aggressive approach meant they posted a defendable total on the scoreboard after being invited to bat by the India captain. The previous four out of five matches here at the venue before Sunday were won by the teams batting first but India opted to field given the dew factor. As captain Suryakumar Yadav, the team had a steady start with Hope along with his new partner Roston Chase taking the team through power play without any hiccups.

Hope was the first wicket to fall as Varun Chakaravarthy had him after being introduced in the ninth over. The back of length ball spun back to rattle stumps of Hope as he tried to accelerate the run rate. But in-form batter Hetmyer only added to the miseries of Indian bowlers as he slammed Varun for a six and a four apart from picking three singles by cleverly placing the ball at mid-wicket. That over yielded 17 runs. In no time, Hetmyer, the most consistent West Indian batter in the tournament, reached 27 off just 11 balls. It was then Surykumar, who brought back Jasprit Bumrah, who gave away seven runs from his first over. He could have had Chase in the over if Abhishek Sharma had held that regulation catch at cover. Bumrah reposed the faith put on him by his captain as he bowled a length ball that angled across and Hetmyer nicked it while attempting to swipe it across the line. The batter, unhappy with the decision, reviewed it but to no avail. Bumrah made it two in the over as he sent back Chase to reduce the opponents to 3/103 inside 12 overs. India could have another one in the next over bowled by Axar Patel but Tilak Varma dropped Sherfane Rutherford in the deep midwicket. One Rutherford fell, former captain Jason Holder then joined forces with Rovman Powell to power the team to a competitive total. **Brief scores:** WI 195/4 in 20 ovs (Chase 40; Jasprit BumraH 2/36) **lost to** India 199/5 in 19.2 ovs (Samson 97 n.o; Holder 2/38).

Full story: newindianexpress.com

195
Highest run-chase for India in all T20 World Cups

It means the world. Right from the day I started playing, this is the day I was waiting for. I have had a special journey, lots of ups and downs, doubting myself, then ending up finding enough belief.

- Sanju Samson

Windies' muscle-power in vain

FIROZ MIRZA @ Kolkata

A few years after the first edition of the T20 World Cup was organised in 2007, West Indies single handedly changed the face of the game with their sheer brute power. They taught the world the best way to play the format. Their preference to go aerial and deal in boundaries caught up with other teams when they lifted the crown for the second time in India almost 10 years ago.

As other teams with England, South Africa and India being the prominent ones to follow the path, the Caribbean side keeps evolving, continuing to be a force to reckon with, especially in the marquee event. No matter how they perform in the bilaterals and other two formats, they look threatening every time they feature in the T20 World Cup. And the 2026 edition being co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka became a testament to it. They were far from the best when they arrived to be part of their favourite event but stormed into the Super Eights by winning all the four Group C games. The match against South Africa was a reality check for them but they didn't give up their gung-ho approach despite being seven down with the scoreboard reading below 90 in the match.

SEMIFINAL LINE-UP

Mar 4	Mar 5
SA vs NZ, Kolkata	Ind vs Eng, Mumbai

In all their matches so far, they were slow to start with the scoring rate dropping further at the Eden Gardens. But they made sure they accumulate as many runs as possible in the middle overs (between 7 and 16) to always end up posting an above-par total when batting first. Sunday was no different as they muscled their way to 149/4 after being 45 for no loss in the powerplay. Despite the co-hosts saving their premium pacer Jasprit Bumrah and wicket-taking spinner Varun Chakaravarthy to keep a check on them in that phase of the game, Shai Hope and Co gathered 104 runs. More importantly, at one stage they were 69/1 after nine overs but plundered 80 runs in the next seven overs with over No 10, 11 and 16 yielding them 13, 17 and 24 runs, respectively.

This show in the middle overs was their third-best in the tournament after 139/1 against Zimbabwe at the Wankhede Stadium and 107/3 against Scotland at the same venue. They finally ended up with 195/4 after 20 overs - score that can be termed above-par - thanks to their power-hitting in the middle overs.

The only regret they might have of not finishing it the way they would have liked to. And that's where they seem to be lagging a bit in this edition. They managed 46 runs in the final overs (between 17 and 20) on Sunday and on most occasions they ended up scoring at the same rate during the event. Against Scotland in their opener at the Eden Gardens, they scored 42/2 in the last four overs.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

Rovman Powell and Jason Holder (R) in action on Sunday | DEBADATTA MALLICK

WINDIES IN THE MIDDLE OVERS (7-16)

Vs Scotland 107/3
Vs England 87/2
Vs Nepal 90/0 (they chased down the target)
Vs Italy 69/3
Vs Zimbabwe 139/1
Vs South Africa 77/3

SA can beat any T20 team: Former coach Simons

ASHOK VENUGOPAL @ Chennai

AS the semifinals of the T20 World Cup is bracing closer, South Africa move into the crucial stage high on confidence. The Proteas, who are unbeaten, will face New Zealand in Kolkata — a team they have beaten earlier in the group stages by seven wickets. Former South African all-rounder and coach Eric Simons, who was SA coach in the 2023 ODI World Cup is delighted with his country's performance in the T20 showpiece. "It is obviously good to have reached the semifinals in a tough competition. I do believe though that it would have been regarded as a 'failure' if they had not because they are one of the strongest teams in the tournament," he told this daily.

South Africa players celebrate their victory on Sunday | PTI

Skipper Aiden Markram is also been praised by Simons for his shrewd captaincy. "It has been very good, Not only leading from the front with his bat setting an example but strategically smart and it is clear he trusts his bowlers," he said.

A lot has been spoken about how and why South Africa have been unbeaten so far. Simons feels that consistency of selection is the key reason behind it. With a well-oiled engine, Simons believes that South Africa can beat anyone and win the title. "Any team can beat any team in the T20 format, but, absolutely SA can beat any team and would go into any semifinals as the favourites. Only India are maybe a little ahead as favourites, if they meet in the final," he said.

Brief scores: Zimbabwe 153/7 in 20 ovs (Raza 73; Maphaka 2/21) **lost to** SA 154/5 in 17.5 ovs (Dewald Brevis 42; Raza 3/29).

Alyssa Healy said goodbye to ODI cricket with 158 against India | BCCI'S X

Fitting farewell for Oz captain

AGENCIES @ Hobart

CAPTAIN Alyssa Healy bid adieu to ODI cricket on a glorious note, smashing 158 as Australia whitewashed India 3-0 in the series with a 185-run thrashing of the world champions in the third and final match here on Sunday. Chasing 410, India were all out for 224 in 45.1 overs to lose the three-match series 0-3. Healy will draw curtains to her illustrious international career after playing the one-off pink-ball Test in Perth against India from March 6.

Israel-Iran conflict: Agony for shuttlers

ANMOL GURUNG @ Chennai

IT was a moment that left her shaken and helpless. Stranded at the Dubai International Airport since Saturday due to ongoing conflict in the West Asia, it has been a harrowing experience for ace shuttler PV Sindhu, who is travelling in order to take part in the All England Championships scheduled to be held from March 3 to 8. Sindhu, who was supposed to board a flight for Birmingham, has been stuck at the airport along with her team members — coach, training, physio et all, just waiting to get out of this tense situation.

Sindhu is not alone. The closure of airspace over gulf has forced the Badminton Association of India to change travel plans for shuttlers who were supposed to leave for England later than Sindhu. The BAI, along with the help of Sports Authority of India, has that some of the shuttlers are now leaving via airports in Africa and Singapore. Unnati Hooda is taking a longer flight via Ethiopia after the airspace over West Asia was shut down following Israel's attack of Iran. At the same time some of the top shuttlers have already reached England.

PV Sindhu said on Sunday that the experience has left her shaken | FILE PIC

The BAI, who is in regular touch with Sindhu and other shuttlers, has been constantly looking to help them get out of the situation but to no avail. And so has been the sports ministry and the Sports Authority of India. "The last few hours have been extremely tense. We could hear the sounds of interceptions overhead and a few hours later there was an explosion very close to where we were holed up at Dubai airport. My coach was barely about 100 metres away from where it happened and had to quickly move out of the area. Experiencing something like this in such close quarters truly shakes you," Sindhu, via a video, summed up her ordeal so far on Sunday. "The last few hours have been extremely tense. We could hear the sounds of interceptions overhead and a few hours later there was an explosion very close to where we were holed up at Dubai airport (...)."

The situation, as things stand, is grave. So much so that the Badminton World Federation has stepped in and said that they are also closely monitoring the situation. "The BWF and Badminton England are closely monitoring the travel challenges arising from the ongoing geopolitical situation in the Middle East. We remain in regular contact with teams and players whose journeys to Birmingham for the YONEX All England Open 2026 may be affected," the BWF said on Sunday.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

CFC earn point versus Odisha

ENS @ Chennai

CHENNAIYIN FC got their first points of the 25/26 Indian Super League season, drawing away at Odisha FC 1-1 on Sunday. Just before the half-time whistle, the visitors went ahead thanks to Elsinho's bullet-header. Chennaiyin found the equaliser in the second half through Carlos Delgado. In another match, Mumbai City FC & NorthEast United played out a 1-1 draw.

Arsenal down Chelsea to maintain title charge

AGENCIES @ London

ARSENAL pulled off a crucial 2-1 win over London rivals Chelsea to maintain their hunt for the Premier League title on Sunday. William Saliba and Jurrien Timber scored for the Gunners to help them beat the Blues. In the process, Arsenal restored their lead (five points) to four points at the top. Man City, after their 1-0 win over Leeds on Saturday, had closed the gap to just two points. City, however, have a game in hand.

Meanwhile, Benjamin Sesko stretched his hot streak with the winning goal as Manchester United beat Crystal Palace 2-1 to go third while Tottenham failed to dispel relegation fears after defeat at Fulham.

Results: Arsenal **2-1** Chelsea; Man United **2-1** Palace; Fulham **2-1** Tottenham; Brighton **2-1** Forest; Leeds **0-1** Man City.

EXPRESS READ

Jayasuriya to quit as Sri Lanka head coach

COLOMBO: Sanath Jayasuriya has stepped down as Sri Lanka's head coach in the wake of his team's abysmal show in the T20 World Cup. Co-hosts Sri Lanka lost all their games in the Super 8s stage. In the preliminary stage, they were beaten by Zimbabwe and recorded three wins.

Savita to give WC qualifiers a miss

HYDERABAD: Veteran goalkeeper and former skipper Savita Punia has opted out of Women World Cup Qualifiers (March 8 to 14 in Hyderabad) due to personal reasons as Hockey India on Sunday named a 20-member squad, to be led by mid-fielder Salima Tete.

Gukesh's search for win continues in Prague

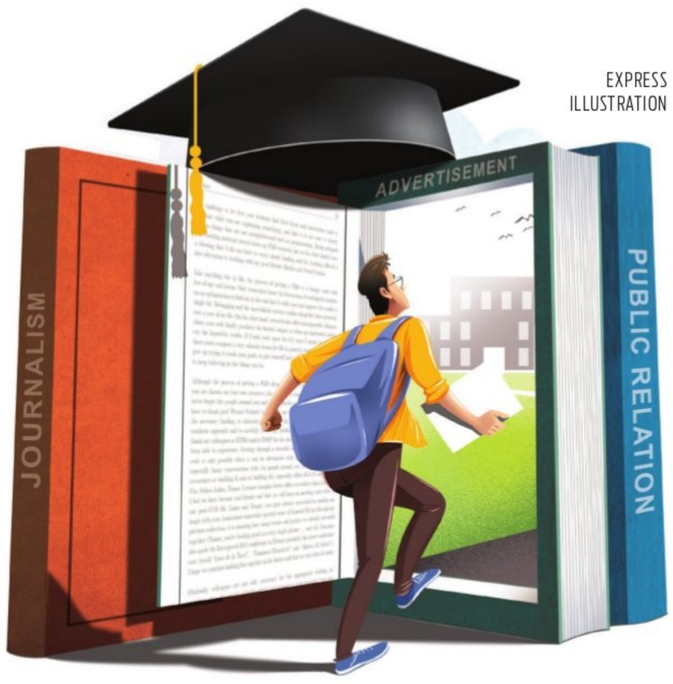
PRAGUE: World champion D Gukesh's hunt for his first win continued as he was held to a draw by David Navara of Czech Republic in the Round 4 of the Prague International Chess Festival here. Jorden van Foreest of Holland nosed ahead of the field with his third victory in four games.

UPCOMING EXAMINATIONS

RRB TECHNICIAN	PUDUCHERRY POLICE SI	WBSSC GROUP D
Dates: March 5 - 9	Date: March 6	Date: March 8

As careers splinter and new roles appear faster than syllabi can keep up, liberal arts educators argue that rigour and outcomes depend on how students learn, and what they can do with it

NIKHIL ABHISHEK



EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION

LIBERAL ARTS IS INDIA'S SMARTEST BET FOR A COMPLEX WORLD

Edu trend

EVEN in 2026, ask around for advice on liberal arts degrees in India and it rarely takes long before remarks like "It's too general" or "Isn't that risky?" surface, followed by the inevitable "What job will you get?"

That familiar scepticism intends to come from a practical place — students and their families want certainty, and they want a degree to translate into a first pay cheque without detours. At the same time, the very forces that make certainty appealing have also made it harder to promise. Work keeps changing. Teams are increasingly cross-functional. Tools evolve quickly, and people are expected to work with data, write clearly, learn fast, and make decisions that hold up under pressure. The question should grow beyond simply asking which discipline is "best", perhaps. What kind of training travels well across roles, sectors, and time?

At FLAME University in Pune, Prof M A Venkataramanan, Pro Vice-Chancellor, frames liberal arts as a way of building mental range before students commit to a more defined path. "What liberal education gives you is a broad view of how the world works. Students can choose a path that fits them, and build a strong mental model of business and society. It widens thought, and helps them handle uncertainty. With AI as the big elephant in the room, they need well informed judgement," he says.

That argument shows up, in different languages, across colleges all over the country that run liberal arts programmes. On these campuses, breadth is treated as a serious form of preparation. Priyanka Chandhok, Vice President of Career Advancement at Ashoka University in Sonipat, Haryana, points to how teaching and evaluation are built, and how that translates into outcomes.

"Liberal arts students engage in research-driven, discussion-led, and writing-intensive coursework that builds analytical, quantitative, and problem-solving skills. They learn to approach complex challenges from multiple perspectives, structure arguments, and adapt to ambiguity. We have seen liberal arts graduates evaluated and hired at par with MBA graduates across organisations," she says.

Continuous evaluation, Venkataramanan argues, builds a kind of professional stamina that students underestimate until they experience it. "At FLAME, for example, close to 50% of the grade comes from assignments, presentations, quizzes, and participation throughout the term. Students feel they must be ready every week, and that keeps them accountable. Over time it teaches time management, because deadlines do not wait for the perfect day," he says.

This kind of learning also creates space for combinations of majors and minors that reflect how work actually functions. Students rarely remain inside one lane. Venkataramanan says he sees strong demand for marketing with psychology, finance with economics, design with data science, and so on. At Ashoka, Chandhok says that combinations like entrepreneurship with history, psychology, or English, are on the rise.

These choices matter because they clarify what "breadth" looks like when it is not vague. It becomes specific training for roles that require both analysis and communication, plus context and judgement. It also explains why recruiters who hire for problem-solving environments keep circling back to liberal arts graduates.

"Recruiters point out that defining the right question is often the hardest part of solving it, and liberal arts training develops that habit," Chandhok explains. John J Kennedy, former Dean of the School of Arts & Humanities at CHRIST University in Bengaluru, agrees. "Liberal arts students don't simply execute tasks but interrogate them. They learn quickly, write better, handle ambiguity better, and ask sharper questions," he notes.

He further argues that the value of a degree is increasingly measured by how long its benefits last. "For a long-term career in a volatile and fluid world, liberal arts can be a smart choice. Technical skills change. They have an expiry date. The ability to think, analyse, and adapt will stay relevant. Employers need people who can analyse complex problems and communicate effectively across diverse groups," the professor says.

Of course, a critique that is hard to ignore is one of access. Liberal arts degrees are sometimes seen as expensive and socially exclusive, especially when they are offered mainly through private, residential universities. Educators acknowledge that cost is real, and they argue that access must expand for liberal arts to be treated as a mainstream pathway rather than a boutique one.

If liberal arts is understood as a way of learning, rather than a brand of degree, it becomes easier to evaluate it on outcomes rather than labels. Students still need domain strength. They also need the ability to read complexity, write clearly, work with people, and keep learning as roles evolve. The promise of liberal arts, in wits strongest form, is that it trains students to build that toolkit early, then apply it wherever they go next.

Liberal education helps students understand how the world works and deal with uncertainty better.

Prof M A Venkataramanan, Pro-Vice Chancellor, FLAME University

We have seen liberal arts graduates evaluated and hired at par with MBA graduates across several organisations.

Priyanka Chandhok, VP of Career Advancement, Ashoka University

For someone requiring an immediate job, liberal arts may not be suitable. For a long-term career, in a volatile, fluid world, it may be a smart choice.

John J Kennedy, former Dean of the School of Arts & Humanities, CHRIST University

Building a Quality-Driven Gen Next

Outcome-based learning, credit mobility and skilling are redefining education

ARYA VIDYA

QUALITY of education goes beyond exam scores. It depends on how well schools and colleges build knowledge, skills, values, and adaptability for real life. A student with 100 per cent marks but limited problem-solving ability, employable skills, or social responsibility, exposes the gap between marks and meaningful learning.

According to the Economic Survey 2025-26, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has moved the system towards outcome-based education. This is reflected in competency-based assessments such as PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024, which show Grade 3 proficiency rebounding to 65% in Mathematics and 57% in Language, up from 42% and 39% in 2021. Programmes in foundational literacy and numeracy, early childhood care, teacher training, and monitoring aim to move from mere enrolment to tracked learning progress.

In higher education, reforms are visible through the Academic Bank of Credit, which covers 2,660 institutions with over 4.6 crore student IDs. It allows learners to accumulate and redeem credits across institutions, enabling multiple entry and exit points and mobility. The National Credit Framework (NCrF) aims to connect academic and skill-based credits.

NEP 2020 also calls for embedding skilling in secondary education and closer industry links in higher education through measures such as the Professor of Practice model. Yet Periodic Labour Force Survey 2023-24 data shows only 0.97% of 14-18-year-olds have received formal institutional skill training.

Five years on, many structural mechanisms for outcome-based learning, credit mobility, and skill integration are in place, but turning them into consistent learning quality and employability gains will require sustained funding, implementation, and monitoring across states and institutions.

EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION

Admission Checklist for Parents

Industry Connect
- Are there active industry tie-ups, live projects, or a Professor of Practice model?
- How is the curriculum aligned with job market needs?

Faculty & Research
- What is the faculty's research output (publications, patents, projects)?
- Are teachers regularly trained and updated?

Internships & Skills
- Is there a structured internship pipeline?
- Are skill-based credits integrated under the National Credit Framework?

Academic Flexibility
- Is the institution part of the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC)?
- Are multiple entry-exit and credit transfer options available?

Global Exposure
- Are there exchange, twinning, or dual degree programmes?
- Does the institution host international faculty or collaborations?

WHAT AFTER LIBERAL ARTS? MAPPING CAREERS

Liberal Arts Skills That Travel Across Industries
- Critical thinking
- Research & analysis
- Writing & communication
- Ethical reasoning
- Cross-disciplinary thinking
- Adaptability

1 Policy and Governance

WHERE IDEAS BECOME PUBLIC DECISIONS

Roles: Policy Analyst, Legislative Assistant, Public Affairs Consultant

Employers
- Government bodies
- Policy think tanks
- International organisations

2 Corporate Strategy and Consulting

WHERE ANALYSIS DRIVES BUSINESS DECISIONS

Roles: Strategy Associate, Business Analyst, Operations Executive

Employers
- Consulting firms
- Large corporates
- Strategy divisions

3 Media and Communications

WHERE NARRATIVE BUILDS INFLUENCE

Roles: Journalist, Content Strategist, Brand Manager

Employers
- Media houses
- PR firms
- Corporate comms teams

4 Start-ups and Product

WHERE VERSATILITY MATTERS MOST

Roles: Product Manager, Community Manager, Operations Coordinator

Employers
- Start-ups
- Tech firms
- Digital platforms

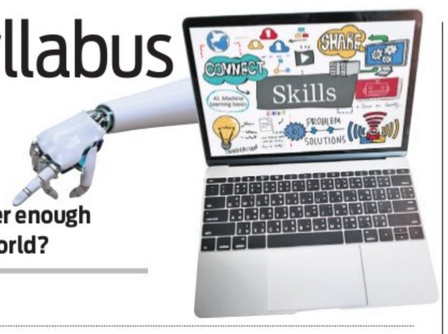
5 Development and Social Impact

WHERE RESEARCH MEETS REAL-WORLD CHANGE

Roles: Field Researcher, Monitoring & Evaluation Associate, CSR Executive

Employers
- NGOs
- Multilateral agencies
- CSR divisions

From Syllabus to Skills



Degrees alone no longer enough in a skill-demanding world?

YECHURI SASHIKANTH

ACROSS sectors, employers are seeking capabilities that many traditional education and training pathways are still catching up with. Global studies, including the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report, suggest that a significant share of today's skills will need to evolve in the years ahead. For India Inc., the task is not only to generate employment, but to prepare people for roles that are constantly changing. This calls for a more deliberate future skills roadmap that connects education with industry needs and strengthens vocational learning and entrepreneurship. In a skills-driven economy, students are increasingly expected to look beyond their academic curriculum.

Many now pursue certifications, short-term courses, and specialised training to build industry-relevant competencies. Engineering and science students enrol in data analytics and cybersecurity programmes, while commerce and management candidates opt for digital marketing and business analytics. Accessible platforms such as SWAYAM and other online providers have made flexible, affordable courses widely available, complemented by certification programmes from professional bodies that blend theory with practice.

In this environment, students are urged to be selective. A CV that lists certifications, internships, hackathons, and live projects may reflect initiative and practical exposure, but multiple credentials without depth carry limited value. Rather than stacking certificates indiscriminately, learners need to focus on developing relevant, demonstrable skills. In a landscape where roles and responsibilities continue to evolve, continuous learning has become essential. Moving from syllabus-based study to a skill-focused approach is increasingly important for staying aligned with the changing demands of the job market.

Domain	Certifications
Digital Marketing	SEO, Email marketing, Search Engine Marketing (SEM)
Data & Analytics	Data Analysis, Excel, Power BI, Python
Artificial Intelligence	AI, Machine Learning basics
Digital & Business	Digital Marketing, Social Media Strategy
Finance	Financial Modelling, Investment Analysis
Cybersecurity	Ethical Hacking, Network Security
Sustainability	ESG, Climate & Sustainability Studies
Cloud & Tech	Cloud Computing, DevOps basics
Design & Product	UI/UX Design, Product Fundamentals

Infra, faculty gaps hinder higher edu growth

	Gov't Funding	Alumni	Tuition Fees
IITs	₹12,123 cr Union Budget allocation	Strong alumni pools	Small fraction
Central Universities	Central university pool of ₹17,440 cr	Minimal	Little dependence
State Universities	State government funding (uneven)	Minimal	Dependence on tuition, exam fees
Liberal Arts Universities	Limited to nil	Backed by founders/donors	Primary revenue stream

KARTHIKEYA S

ALTHOUGH universities across India's higher education system are gearing up to adapt to the future, uneven resources continue to determine which of them actually can.

"Universities are trying to respond to evolving market demands at very different speeds because disparities in resources are enormous," says Dr Rajendra D Shinde, former principal of St Xavier's College, Mumbai. Public universities & well-funded public universities can invest in good faculty, research facilities, and strong infrastructure, unlike most state universities & lower-tier colleges, he explains.

While the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 promotes multidisciplinary education, implementation remains uneven due to a key obstacle: faculty availability. Nearly 25 per cent of permanent posts in central universities and up to 70 per cent in some state universities remain vacant. Additionally, Dr Shinde says infrastructure gaps and rigid academic schedules further slow interdisciplinary learning. Many institutions lack sufficient classrooms to support multi-subject study, while unreliable public transport limits the flexibility of both teachers and students. Public universities & lower-tier colleges must find creative ways to achieve financial autonomy, the former principal says. He suggests that universities pursue industry partnerships, CSR funding and progressive fee reforms. "Institutions must build confidence among industry stakeholders that investing in them yields returns," he notes.

Research output: Where varsities stand

IITs
- 67.5 per cent of India's total publications
- Strong industry partnerships
- 1,000+ startups incubated
- STEM, deep tech, applied science research

Central Universities
- Over 97k research papers published
- Project-based partnerships
- Fewer patents and startups
- Policy research

State Universities
- 65,889 publications from agricultural universities
- Regional partnerships
- Limited start-up infrastructure
- STEM, agriculture, medicine research

Liberal Arts Universities
- Low, but growing research scale
- Partnerships embedded in curriculum
- Entrepreneurship integrated in learning
- Social sciences, interdisciplinary research

As higher education tries to modernise, structural realities push back

Indian diversity to help youth in machine-learning era

RAUNAQ BAJAJ

AI can analyse vast amounts of data, but only humans can interpret context, culture, emotion & the deeper meaning behind information

IN an era defined by dashboards, data streams and algorithms, the assumption that numbers rule is understandable. As artificial intelligence (AI) reshapes industries, though, a deeper truth that data alone does not drive decisions, that meaning does, is emerging. AI systems can process vast datasets in seconds, detect patterns and generate outputs with impressive speed. But interpretation—the ability to understand nuance, context, and intent—remains a profoundly human strength. This is where linguistics and language skills acquire new urgency.

Liberal arts disciplines, particularly linguistics, train individuals to decode structure, semantics, tone, and subtext. They teach how meaning shifts across audiences, cultures, and platforms. In a data-driven economy, that interpretive skill becomes a competitive advantage. Natural Language Processing, AI training models, and localisation industries rely heavily on experts who understand syntax, phonetics and cultural nuance alongside computational logic. More than programmers, the architects behind multilingual chatbots, voice assistants, and translation engines are language specialists who bridge human expression and machine learning.

In India, with hundreds of languages and dialects, multilingual fluency is not an exception but a norm. As global AI systems expand beyond English dominance, India's linguistic diversity positions it as a crucial player in training culturally adaptive models and strengthening digital diplomacy. Beyond technology, language remains central to leadership. Storytelling shapes brands, mobilises teams and influences policy. In boardrooms and political arenas alike, those who frame narratives effectively command attention and trust.

In a world flooded with information, the true differentiator is not access to data, it is the ability to interpret, articulate and humanise it.

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02.03.2026
MONDAY

DAY'S DIARY

Death anniversary

Sarojini Naidu, fondly called 'the Nightingale of India' by Mahatma Gandhi, passed away on this day in 1949, in Lucknow

EARLY LIFE

Born in Hyderabad in 1879, Sarojini was a political activist, feminist and poet. She was drawn to Indian National Congress' (INC) movement for independence from British rule

POLITICAL LANDMARK

She was appointed the president of INC in 1925 and later became the Governor of the United Provinces (present-day Uttar Pradesh) in 1947

NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Her birthday is celebrated as National Women's Day, to honour the achievements and contributions of women to India and the society

What's happening in Bengaluru?

PG 2

Pink and PUNK

Ahead of her talk today, fashion icon Dame Zandra Rhodes on how styling the likes of Princess Diana and Freddie Mercury was a 'quirk of fate'

GARGI GUPTA

From dressing British royalty like Lady Diana Spencer to rockstars like Freddie Mercury and Marc Bolan, **Dame Zandra Rhodes** has been ruling the global fashion industry, slaying every look like it's her very own runway. The iconic British designer modestly refers to dressing these legends as a 'wonderful quirk of fate', when we speak to her on Saturday, soon after her landing in Bengaluru from England.

Despite her deep love for textile design, Rhodes recalls struggling to find buyers early in her career, a setback which she soon overcame to get on the right track towards fame and success. Two Ukrainian models loved my designs; they loved the printed kaftans and told me to go to America," she shares. This led her to Diana Vreeland, the then editor-in-chief of American Vogue, who championed Rhodes' work, which later extended to the British royal family. The 85-year-old recalls the surprise of seeing Princess Anne wear one of her creations for her official engagement portraits. "I didn't know she was going to wear one of my dresses. Norman Parkinson (fashion photographer) had organised the shoots and asked me to send something over, so I simply sent one of my favourites!" she laughs.

Known for her electrifying pink hair and avant-garde aesthetic, Rhodes will be seen sharing her two cents, alongside Rajeev Sethi, design activist and scenographer who designed the Jaya He GVK New Museum at Terminal 2 of the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in Mumbai, at a talk titled, 'Design, Skills and Transcontinental Flair' at Bangalore International Centre, Domlur, on Monday evening. The duo will share experiences which bridged craft and couture and the communities of makers who shaped their legendary careers.

Rhodes' work frequently bridges the gap between traditional craft and high fashion, and features a certain degree of Indian influence, as she calls her relationship with India a 'journey of a lifetime', as she shares, "I'm influenced by Indian artisans and traditional crafts – those inspired my beaded dresses in the '80s."

Her decision to formalise her legacy came about after a health scare during the pandemic, following which she established the Fashion and Textile Museum in London and the Zandra Rhodes Foundation. "A diagnosis showed that I had a growth in my stomach and the doctors gave me six months. So then, I put together a will and established the eponymous foundation," she says, adding, "The obstacles have been bigger than ever, but it has been worth the cost for the love of design," further advising novice designers to "not give up and make themselves seen."

Ensembles of Princess Diana and Freddie Mercury designed by Dame Zandra Rhodes

As film stars Rashmika Mandanna and Vijay Deverakonda tied the knot and fans collectively swooned at the candid pictures that gave a glimpse into their wedding, the Bengaluru-based photography company behind the viral pics, which also shot Ranbir-Alia and Kiara-Sidharth's nuptials, shares what goes into capturing the heart of celeb weddings

VOW-WOW!

MAHIMA NAGARAJU

OVER the last few weeks, news has been abuzz anticipation over Karnataka's own Rashmika Mandanna and Telugu star Vijay Deverakonda's nuptials. While rumours floated around as details were kept under wraps, the couple announced their marriage with an Instagram post. Glimpses of the wedding showed a traditional scene with the couple being showered in rose petals, playfully tapping on each other's hands, smiling widely and tearing up at the enormity of the moment. "Rashmika and Vijay are warm and welcoming people. And when photographers feel that warmth, it translates into photos," explains **Siddharth Sharma**, founder, House on the Clouds, the city-based wedding photography company which captured these moments.

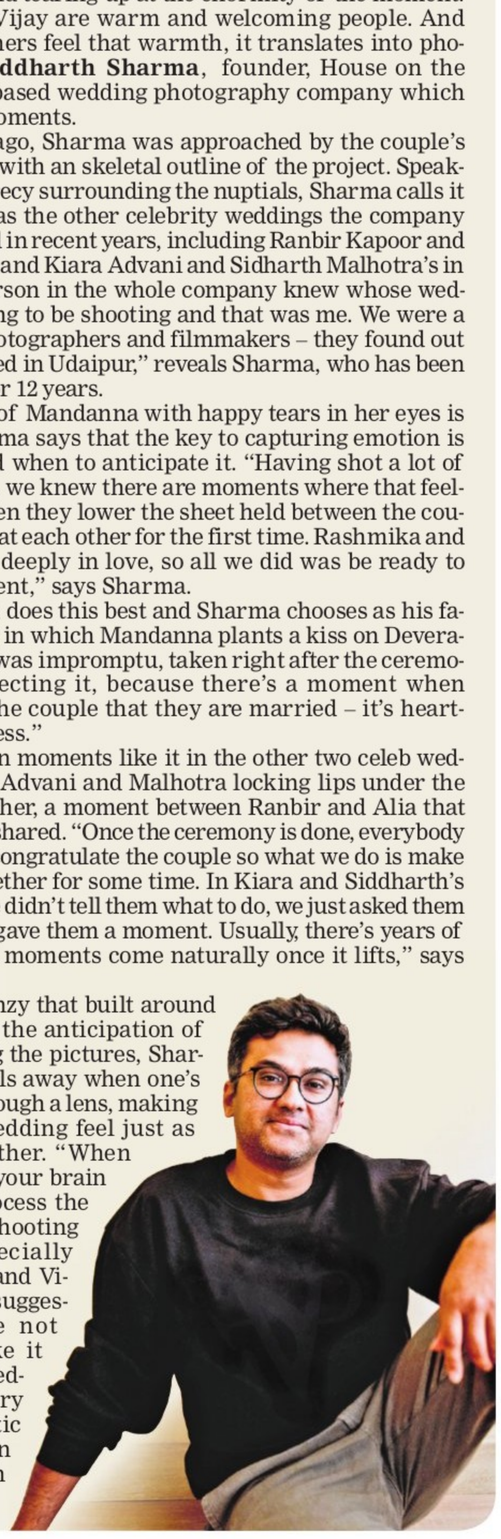
A few months ago, Sharma was approached by the couple's wedding planner with an skeletal outline of the project. Speaking about the secrecy surrounding the nuptials, Sharma calls it 'about the same' as the other celebrity weddings the company has photographed in recent years, including Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt's in '22 and Kiara Advani and Sidharth Malhotra's in '24. "Only one person in the whole company knew whose wedding we were going to be shooting and that was me. We were a team of seven photographers and filmmakers – they found out the day they landed in Udaipur," reveals Sharma, who has been a photographer for 12 years.

When the shot of Mandanna with happy tears in her eyes is brought up, Sharma says that the key to capturing emotion is learning how and when to anticipate it. "Having shot a lot of Telugu weddings, we knew there are moments where that feeling hits – like when they lower the sheet held between the couple and they look at each other for the first time. Rashmika and Vijay are visibly, deeply in love, so all we did was be ready to capture the moment," says Sharma.

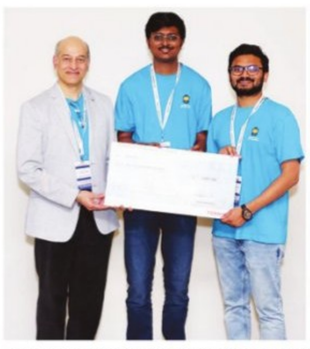
The shot which does this best and Sharma chooses as his favourite is the one in which Mandanna plants a kiss on Deverakonda's nose. "It was impromptu, taken right after the ceremony. We were expecting it, because there's a moment when realisation hits the couple that they are married – it's heartwarming to witness."

There have been moments like it in the other two celeb weddings too, one of Advani and Malhotra locking lips under the mandap and another, a moment between Ranbir and Alia that the couple hasn't shared. "Once the ceremony is done, everybody starts coming to congratulate the couple so what we do is make sure they are together for some time. In Kiara and Siddharth's case especially, we didn't tell them what to do, we just asked them to step aside and gave them a moment. Usually, there's years of weight and these moments come naturally once it lifts," says Sharma.

Despite the frenzy that built around the wedding and the anticipation of millions awaiting the pictures, Sharma finds it all falls away when one's eye is looking through a lens, making a high-profile wedding feel just as special as any other. "When you're shooting, your brain will not even process the fact that you're shooting celebrities, especially since Rashmika and Vijay were open to suggestions. We were not made to feel like it was a celebrity wedding – it was very organic, authentic one, focussed on moments with family," he says.



XPRESS FOCUS



Bengaluru's Deevia Software Wins Toshiba GridDB IoT Hackathon

Deevia Software won the GridDB Cloud IoT Hackathon organised by Toshiba Digital Solutions Corporation in collaboration with Toshiba Software India Private Limited. Bengaluru teams dominated the results, with Wimera securing second place and RichieRich finishing fourth.

The nationwide hackathon, held between October and December 2025, attracted over 250 entries focused on real-time IoT applications across healthcare, finance, and knowledge management. Five teams advanced to the Bengaluru finals in January 2026, sharing a total prize pool of USD 5,000.

NeuroEquilibrium Expands Vertigo Clinics Across Bengaluru

NeuroEquilibrium, a subsidiary of FutureCure Health Private Limited, is expanding its specialised vertigo and balance disorder clinics across Bengaluru to improve access to accurate diagnosis and targeted treatment.

NeuroEquilibrium focuses on identifying the root cause of vertigo rather than managing symptoms alone. The organisation has treated over 150,000 patients using evidence-based protocols and now operates 16 clinics across Bengaluru, including Hebbal, Malleswaram, Whitefield, HSR Layout, and Electronic City.

Bhago Mobility, Honda Partner to Launch EV Battery-Swapping Platform

Bhago Mobility has partnered with Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India and Honda Power Pack Energy India to launch an integrated electric mobility platform powered by battery-swapping technology.

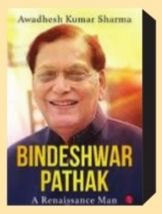
The initiative will roll out electric two-wheelers in Bengaluru and Delhi, with a pan-India expansion planned over the next three years. The platform combines Honda's Activa e: with HEID's battery-swapping infrastructure to reduce downtime and improve productivity for urban mobility workers.

Anaadyanta-2026 Techno-Cultural Fest Inaugurated at NMIT

'Anaadyanta-2026', the annual national-level techno-cultural festival of Nitte Meenakshi Institute of Technology, Yelahanka, was inaugurated by Vivasvan Shastri, Vice President (Engineering), GE Healthcare.

Popular South Indian cine and television actor Viraat was the Guest of Honour. The inauguration ceremony was attended by faculty members, trustees of Nitte Education Trust, student coordinators, and dignitaries. The event marks the beginning of a series of technical, cultural, and innovation-driven activities involving students from institutions across the country.

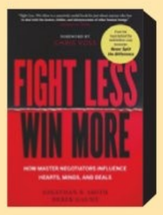
BOOK NOOK



Bindeshwar Pathak: A Renaissance Man

By Awadhesh Kumar Sharma

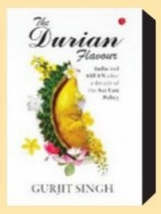
This book captures the spirit of a man who not only transformed public health but also challenged deep-rooted social barriers by deicating his life to service and justice.



Fight Less, Win More

By Jonathan B. Smith and Derek Gaunt

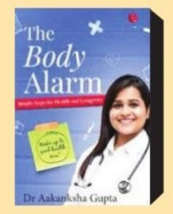
Unlike traditional business books, this book functions as a hands-on manual. It has real-world case studies, step-by-step guidance and low-stakes practice exercises that will help readers.



The Durian Flavour: India and ASEAN after a decade of the Act East Policy

By Gurjit Singh

Engaging, accessible and timely, it reveals why India and ASEAN matter to each other, and why their partnership matters to the world.



The Body Alarm: Simple Steps for Health and Longevity

By Dr Aakanksha Gupta

It reveals the body's early warning mechanisms. With cultural insights and medical clarity, showing how symptom awareness, timely investigation and informed action can transform health.

IN FOCUS

Art curator and critic Uma Nair walks Dr Venu V, chairperson of Kochi Biennale Foundation and former Chief Secretary of Kerala, through visual works by 10 travel and media photographers being exhibited at NGMA's Lenscape Kerala exhibition | **VINOD KUMAR T**

QUICKFIX

BANANA WALNUT MUFFINS

INGREDIENTS

- **Bananas:** 4, ripe
- **Egg:** 1
- **Sugar:** ½ cup
- **Oil:** ¼ cup
- **All-purpose flour:** 1 cup
- **Vanilla essence:** 1 tsp
- **Baking powder:** 1 tsp
- **Baking soda:** ½ tsp
- **A pinch of salt**
- **A handful of chopped walnuts**

METHOD

- In a mixing bowl, mash the bananas well. Add the egg, sugar, oil and vanilla essence. Whisk until smooth and well combined.
- In another bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.
- Gradually, add the dry ingredients to the wet mixture and gently fold to combine.
- Fold in the chopped walnuts. If the batter seems too thick, add a little water to loosen it slightly.
- Spoon the batter into muffin cups, filling them about ¾ full.
- Bake in a preheated oven at 170°C for about 30 minutes.

Contributed by **Gomathi Karthisen,** Chennai

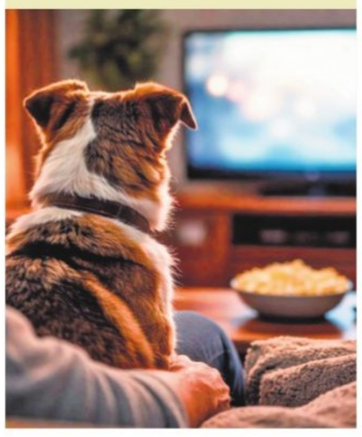
DR VIVEK ARORA

The expert is a senior veterinarian, Crown Vet, Delhi.

Is watching television harmful for pets? My dog settles in with me when I watch. Is 5-10 minutes of TV-time okay?

Watching television is safe for pets, and short periods of TV time are generally harmless. Dogs are often attracted more to the sounds, movement, or simply being close to their owners than to the screen itself. A few minutes of TV– like five to ten – does not affect their vision or brain function. The key is that TV should never replace regular exercise, mental stimulation, or social interaction. As long as your dog gets enough walks, play, and engagement, snuggling on the sofa while you watch TV can be a relaxing and enjoyable bonding experience.

ASK AN XPERT



FITBIT

FOOD, FITNESS, AND YOUR MENSTRUAL CYCLE

Your menstrual cycle is not just a reproductive process. It also influences energy levels, strength, appetite and recovery. Understanding how nutrition and exercise interact with your cycle can help optimise workouts, manage cravings and support overall well-being.

MENSTRUAL PHASE (DAYS 1–5)

- **What happens:** Hormones are at their lowest; energy levels may dip.
- **Food focus:** Include iron-rich foods (leafy greens, lean meats, beans) and anti-inflammatory choices (omega-3 sources like walnuts or chia seeds) to support blood loss and recovery.
- **Training tip:** Give preference to low-impact activities like walking, gentle yoga, or light stretching.

FOLLICULAR PHASE (DAYS 6–14)

- **What happens:** Oestrogen rises, increasing energy and motivation
- **Food focus:** Prioritise complex carbohydrates (whole grains, sweet potatoes) and lean protein to support muscle synthesis and training intensity.
- **Training tip:** This is often the best phase for high-intensity workouts and strength training because energy and recovery are elevated.

OVULATORY PHASE (DAYS 15–17)

- **What happens:** Oestrogen peaks just before ovulation; the body may feel strongest.
- **Food focus:** Maintain balanced meals with protein, carbs and healthy fats to fuel performance and recovery.
- **Training tip:** Take advantage of this surge by incorporating powerful strength sessions or interval training.

LUTEAL PHASE (DAYS 18–28)

- **What happens:** Progesterone rises, which can increase appetite and affect energy.
- **Food focus:** Regular balanced meals with protein, fibre and healthy fats help stabilise blood sugar and manage cravings.
- **Training tip:** Moderate-to-low intensity workouts (steady-state cardio, mobility, moderate lifting) often feel best; listen to your body.

CYCLE-BASED NUTRITION STRATEGIES

- **Protein at every meal:** supports muscle repair and satiety.
- **Carbohydrates timed around training:** improves performance and glycogen replenishment.
- **Healthy fats:** support hormonal balance (avocado, nuts, olive oil).
- **Hydration:** critical throughout all phases to support metabolism and recovery.

TRAINING AND MOOD AWARENESS

- **Mindful tracking:** Understanding patterns in energy, mood, and strength can help tailor workouts to feel sustainable.
- **Flexible planning:** Some days may feel easier for high exertion – other days, rest or light movement is more supportive.
- **Consistency over intensity:** Adapt training based on how the body feels rather than forcing a rigid plan.

By aligning food choices and training intensity with each phase, individuals can improve performance, manage cravings, and support recovery naturally. This cycle-aware approach leads to greater comfort, better results, and a more intuitive relationship with one's body.

By Madhura P Behki, nutrition expert, cult—a fitness and wellness platform

EXPRESS CONNECT

HAVE A RECIPE OR ART WORK TO SHARE, OR A QUESTION TO ASK?

@XpressBengaluru
bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com
@xpress_bengaluru

WHATWHENWHYWHERE

Laugh Riot

Spend the night enjoying light-hearted laughter and engaging performances by talented comedians. This event offers a welcoming space to unwind, share smiles, and enjoy quality entertainment.

WHEN: March 2, 9.30pm
WHERE: TAG Comedy Club, Koramangala
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

Festive Fashion

Celebrate Holi at a large-scale, two-day open-air festival designed to blend tradition and modern production. The event features a mega main stage with celebrity DJs, synchronised colour countdowns, and a high-fidelity rain dance setup. A Holi fashion show integrates high fashion elements into the festive atmosphere, while the focus remains on eco-friendly practices with organic, non-toxic colours provided to all attendees.

WHEN: March 3, 11am
WHERE: Iqra Games Village, Kudlu Main Road
DETAILS: bookmyshow.com

A Different Dimension

Witness an evocative dance performance by Italian choreographer Raphael Bianco titled M'Illumino D'Immenso. Through movement, it seeks to explore the physical and metaphysical dimensions of reality, revealing different perceptions and interpretations of illumination and its ability to generate harmony between body and spirit.

WHEN: March 3, 7pm
WHERE: Alliance Francaise De Bangalore, Thimmaiah Road
CALL: 96635 90692

Play Time

Indulge in a casual mid-week pool session set in a lively sports bar environment. The event features a dedicated play window encouraging friendly matches and social games. Designed as a relaxed weekday hangout, it invites people to gather, play pool and unwind in an informal community setting.

WHEN: March 3, 12pm
WHERE: Underdoggs, Whitefield
DETAILS: 80690 88400

Beats of Colour

Step into a Holi celebration infused with the charm of Tamil music. This event brings together the joy of colours and the rhythm of Tamil songs. Participants can enjoy music, light-hearted colour play, and a shared festive experience.

WHEN: March 2, 12pm
WHERE: Gilly's 104, Koramangala
DETAILS: 96069 34551

Creative Pour

Explore your creativity by learning to make a resin tray. Create your own design with hands-on guidance and all materials provided.

WHEN: March 2, 6.30pm
WHERE: Fabrizo – Creative Art & Craft Lounge, BTM Layout
DETAILS: 73861 41621

Touch of Magic

Go beyond the canvas and experiment with your hands to create a masterpiece on wood using texture and acrylic paints. All materials provided.

WHEN: March 2, 11.30am
WHERE: Art Beat, HSR Layout
DETAILS: artbeatclasses.com

ARTCORNER

NATURE AT PLAY

Sculptor Kiran Dixit Thacker is inspired by her environment – drawing from the seasons, the plant and animal life around her

With the holy month of Ramadan going on, elaborate iftar dishes come alive. Ranging from traditional recipes to modern favourites, there is something for everyone. *CE* curates a few easy recipes that you can try at home

WIDE SPREAD

LATHEEFA BINTH FAROOK

MUSLIMS worldwide are currently welcoming the holy month of Ramadan, the most sacred period in the Islamic calendar. Defined by fasting, prayer and reflection, the month is also recognised for its centuries-old traditions that foster a deep sense of global solidarity and communal harmony.

The iftar, the meal used to break the day-long fast, has become increasingly elaborate over the years. However, despite modern additions, it is the nostalgia-evoking traditional fare that remains the centrepiece. During this month, food takes on a more profound meaning. It is not just about sustenance, but about sharing and hospitality.

During the iftar, it is a common sight to see people of all faiths invited to join the meal, where the simple act of sharing a snack becomes a gesture of peace and mutual respect. The snacks served at these gatherings play a vital role. These small bites are the first point of contact after a day of discipline. Dates remain the classic choice because their natural sugars provide an immediate energy boost that the body can easily process.

Homemade snacks – ranging from protein-rich nuts and dried fruits to traditional regional delicacies – serve as the perfect bridge to the main meal. Treating the first bite with care ensures that the body remains nourished and resilient throughout the holy month.

The importance of the homemade snack, whether it is a sweet banana fritter or a savoury meat pastry, cannot be overstated. They are the mainstay of the iftar spread, passed from hand to hand, neighbour to neighbour. Here are a few recipes to try at home this Ramadan season.

Unnakkaya

Ingredients
- Ripe banana: 2
- Grated coconut: 1 cup
- Ghee: 1 tbsp
- Cardamom: 2 (crushed)
- Cashew nut powder: 2 tbsp
- Raisins: 2 tbsp (chopped)
- Aval (Flattened rice): 4 tbsp
- Sugar to taste
- Oil to fry

Method: Boil the banana, peel off the skin, mash well and keep aside. Heat ghee in a frying pan and stir-fry cashew nuts and raisins along with coconut and cardamom. Add sugar to the mix and stir well. Add aval and mix well. Remove from the stove and allow it to cool. Add cardamom powder. Apply a touch of ghee to both palms. Divide the mashed bananas into evenly sized small balls. Stuff the coconut mixture carefully inside the mashed bananas and seal both ends into cylindrical shapes. Heat the oil in a deep-bottomed pan and fry the bananas until they turn golden brown in colour.

Dates milk shake

Ingredients
- Dates: 1/3 cup
- Banana: 1
- Milk: ½ cup
- A pinch of cardamon powder
- Ice cube: As needed

Method: Chop dates into small pieces. Peel and cut a banana into thick slices. Add dates and sliced bananas to a blender jar. Pour milk over it and add a pinch of cardamom powder. Blend until smooth and creamy. Check the consistency of the shake, if it is too thick or too thin to your liking, then dilute it by adding some more milk or thicken it by adding more banana, respectively and blend it again.

Kalathappam

Ingredients
- Raw rice: 1 cup (soaked for 2 hours)
- Parboiled rice: 1 cup (soaked for 2 hours)
- Cooked rice: 1 cup
- Jaggery: ½ cup
- Finely sliced shallots: 1/4 cup
- Roughly chopped coconut: 4 tbsp
- Baking soda: a pinch (optional)
- Salt: To taste
- Coconut oil: 2 tbsp
- Water as needed

Method: Grind soaked rice and cooked rice with ¼ cup water into a thick, idli-like consistency. Stir in strained jaggery syrup, salt and a pinch of baking powder (optional). In a pressure cooker, fry coconut slices and shallots in oil until golden; set aside and coat the cooker's sides with the leftover oil. Mix half the fried toppings into the batter, pour it into the hot cooker, top with the rest, and cook on low heat (no whistle) for 15 minutes. Let it rest for 15 minutes before checking with a toothpick. Cool completely, invert, slice and enjoy.

Potato semiya balls

Ingredients
- Potato: 3
- Roasted vermicelli: 1 cup (crushed)
- Chopped onion: 1
- Green chilli: 2
- Ginger-garlic paste: 1 tsp
- Turmeric powder: ½ tsp
- Pepper powder: 1 tsp
- Minced/shredded chicken: half a cup
- Egg: 1
- Curry leaves: A few
- Salt to taste
- Oil for frying

Method: Pressure cook unpeeled potatoes with salt (3 whistles), then peel and mash finely. Sauté onion, chillies, ginger-garlic paste, chicken, curry leaves and spices with salt until well-cooked and set aside. Form potato balls, indent the centres, add chicken filling, and seal. Shape them into small nests with a slight press in the middle. Dip each nest into a salted egg batter, then coat thoroughly with roasted vermicelli. Deep fry 2-3 nests at a time until golden (avoid overheating to prevent cracking). Drain on tissue and serve hot with tomato sauce.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS **CLASSIFIEDS**

SMART ADS

PUBLIC NOTICE
CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME
I, (OLD NAME) VARGHESE KOTTUR VADAKKETHIL YOHANNAN, Residing at No. 32, Maple Green, 3rd Phase, Chikkagubbi Village, Bidarahalli, Near Vijaya Vittala College, Bangalore North, Dr Shivarama Karanth Nagar, Bengaluru-560077, have changed my Name from **(OLD NAME) VARGHESE KOTTUR VADAKKETHIL YOHANNAN to (NEW NAME) K J VARGHESE** vide affidavit dated 26.02.2026 sworn before Notary Uday Kumar K, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
WE (1) **NAVEEN** (FATHER) AND (2) **EKTA** (MOTHER) Both are Address: Qtr No.362, 3rd Floor, Block 30, CPWD QTRS Koramangala 2nd Block, Bangalore -560034, We hereby declare that we intend to change the name of our daughter's from **SAMKHYA to SAMKHYA DHILLON.** vide affidavit dated: 28/2/2026 Before Notary **K.V.Mani** Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **DHANALAKSHMI ASWATHA,** W/o S V Naresh Kumar, age 51 years, R/at No. 5/2, 40 Feet Road, 4th Cross, S T Teresa of Kolkata Church, Bhoopasandra, RMV 2nd Stage, Bangalore-560094 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **DHANALAKSHMI NARESH KUMAR** to **DHANALAKSHMI ASWATHA,** henceforth I shall be known and called as **DHANALAKSHMI ASWATHA** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 27-02-2026, sworn before Advocate and Notary **JALANDHARA** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SHUBHASHRI VAIDYA,** aged about 51 years, W/o. Ravindranath Vaidya, Kulkarni Galli, Betageri, Gadag-582102, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **SHUBHASREE VAIDYA** to **SHUBHASHRI VAIDYA,** vide affidavit dated 27.02.2026, sworn to before K.V. mani, Advocate & Notary, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, SATISH. N, residing at #51/1, 3rd Cross, Devegowda Block, Adugodi, Bangalore-560030, have changed my name to SATHISH. N for all purposes affidavit dated 28/02/2026 sworn before advocate and notary B M CHANDRASHEKAR., Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **HARDHIK CHANDRAKANT PATEL** S/o. Chandrakant Ranchhod Bhai Patel R/o Flat No. A308, Sri Supreme Apartments, Opp. to Nandi Park, VTC: Bannerghatta, PO: Bannerghatta, Anekal, Bengaluru-560083 have changed my Name to **HARDIK CHANDRAKANT PATEL** vide affidavit dated: 31.01.2026 before Notary Mohammed Hussain, K. Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **MOHAMMED SHABEER REHMAN** residing at Plot No. 124, 5th B Cross, G R Homes, Hosa Road, Choodasandra, Huskur Post, Anekal Tq, Bengaluru Dist 560099 have changed my minor son's name from **MOHAMMED AADIL R** to **MOHAMMED AADIL REHMAN** vide affidavit dated 28-02-2026 before Notary B.Chitra, Bangalore. **Henceforth he will be known as "MOHAMMED AADIL REHMAN" only.**

CHANGE OF NAME
I, SUMA VASUDEVAN D/o Late K. VASUDEVAN, Residing at No. D-3,2nd Floor Belvadi Apartments, 13th Cross,8th main, Malleshwaram, Bangalore-560003, do hereby solemnly declare that **SUMA VASUDEVAN** and **SUMA** both the names are one and the same. I Further declare my name from **SUMA to SUMA VASUDEVAN** vide Affidavit dated 23.02.2026, sworn before Notary VANAJAKSHI.R, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SEVU,** S/o Madhu Rathod, aged about 51 years, R/at No.263, Harokyathanahalli Village, Makali Post, Dasanapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk do hereby swear before the Notary Sri H.R. KRISHNA, Nelamangala that my name was **SEVU** and in future also the same name will continues and also declare that, I continue my name as **SEVU** only in future also.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ZAHEDA**, aged about 60 years, W/o. Shaikh Shariff, No. 45, 7th Main Road, Vasanthanagar, Bengaluru-560052, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **ZAHEDA BEE SHAIKH SHARIF** to **ZAHEDA,** vide affidavit dated 28.02.2026, sworn to before K.V. Mani, Advocate & Notary, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, K SHEELA, aged about 39 years, W/o. K Hari, residing at No.158, 20th 'B' Cross, Sarvagnya Road, MICO Layout, Hongasandra, Begur Main Road, Bengaluru-560 068, Karnataka have changed my name from SHEELA E to K SHEELA vide Affidavit Dated: 28/02/2026 sworn before advocate and notary B M CHANDRASHEKAR., Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, JAVEED AHMED, residing at No.F-501, 5th Floor, Sahara Residency, 21st Main, Rose Garden Mn, Vinayaka Nagar, J P Nagar, Bangalore - 560078, Karnataka, India, I am also known, called, recognized in the names of **JAVEED AHMED and JAVEED AHAMED,** both this names refers to one and the same person i.e. myself only, henceforth I shall be known and called as **JAVEED AHMED,** vide affidavit dated 27-02-2026, before Notary ARAVIND PATIL G G, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
We, **THANGASIVADURAI T** and **VINITHA** both husband and wife residing at No. 164, 34th Main, Someshwara Colony, Madiwala, BTM 2nd Stage, Bangalore-560068 hereby state that in our minor Son **YUVAN T**'s School certificate Father name is mentioned as **THANGA SIVADURAI** instead of **THANGASIVADURAI T**, in our minor daughter **KAYAL T**'s school certificate mother's name is mentioned as **VINITHA R** instead of **VINITHA** and father's name is mentioned as **THANGASIVA DURAI T** instead of **THANGASIVADURAI T**. Names has been rectified as said above vide affidavit dated 25-02-2026 before Notary B.M. Chandrashekar, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SHIRAJ HARIDASAN,** S/o Sri Haridasan .K, age 45 years, R/o Flat #F 226, Platinum City, O Block, HMT Main Road, Yeshwanthpura, Bangalore North, Bengaluru-560022 do hereby declare that I have changed my name **SHIRAJ.H** (old name) to **SHIRAJ HARIDASAN** (new name), henceforth I shall be known and called as **SHIRAJ HARIDASAN** (new name) for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 27th Feb. 2026, sworn before Advocate and Notary **N. MAHESHA** at Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, JC302430F, Ex NB/SUB **SUDHIR KUMAR T.K,** R/at #309, Sai Krupa Apartment, Begur-Koppa Main Road, Yelenahalli, Begur, Bengaluru 560114 have changed the name of my wife from **K S SWETHA** to **SWETHA K S,** vide affidavit dated 26-02-2026, sworn before XXIX Addl. Chief Judicial Magistrate, Bengaluru City.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ALOK GANANATH**, aged about 39 years, S/o. Gananath Srirampura Narayanashastry, No. A 53 Medley Good Earth Malhar Kengeri, Kambipura, Bengaluru-560074, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **ALOK** to **ALOK GANANATH,** vide affidavit dated 28.02.2026, sworn to before K.V. Mani, Advocate & Notary, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, NAYAK HARSHADBHAI RAJUBHAI (Date of Birth 17/05/1994) S/o Rajubhai Gajanand Nayak, residing at Flat No. 509, 4th Floor, Phase1, O Block, Platinum City, Yeshwanthpur, HMT Main road, Bangalore-560022, Karnataka, have changed my name to NAYAK HARSHAD RAJUBHAI for all purposes affidavit dated 28/02/2026 sworn before advocate and notary Uday Kariyappa .B.G, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SAIDA ZAINAB S M** W/O ASGHAR PASHA B N Resident at:-#No-19, 1st Cross, Rajiv Gandhi Nagar, Near Sambhram College, Vidyaranyapura, Bangalore - 560097, I declare that my Husband name mentioned as **ASGHAR PASHA** declare that my Husband Correct Name is **ASGHAR PASHA B N,** vide affidavit dated 28/2/2026 sworn to before G R Ravichandra Reddy Advocate and Notary Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Harsha Gowda.H** S/o Huchaiah.K.L residing at No.1J,1st main road,1st cross, Muneshwara Layout, Bharath Nagar, 2nd phase, Bydarahalli, Magadi Main Road, Bangalore-560091 hereby declare that my name has been mentioned as **Harsha Gowda** and **Harsha Gowda.H** in different documents. Both the above names refer to one and the same person, i.e., myself. vide affidavit dated: 27.2.2026 Sworn before notary C.K.Anupama, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **NASIMUNNISA, NASEEM RAHMAN**, aged 53 years, W/o Syed Abdul Rahman, R/at #68/4, 9th Main, 4th Cross, Gurappanapalya, Bengaluru-560029 have changed my name to **NASEEMUNNISA,** vide affidavit dated 27-02-2026, before Notary **MEER HASSAN** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, (OLD NAME) KANYAMBADIBABASAHIBFAKEERAHMED MOHAMED AYUBBASHA residing at No. 9/1-1,1st Floor, 1st Main Road, 2nd Cross Appajappa Layout LR Bande Bangalore-560032., have changed my name from **(OLD NAME) KANYAMBADIBABASAHIBFAKEERAHMED MOHAMED AYUBBASHA** to **(NEW NAME) MOHAMED AYUB BASHA FAKIR AHMED S/o FAKIR AHMED** vide Affidavit dated 14.02.2026 sworn before Notary Prasad Shetty K.B., Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **VINAYA .N**, S/o. Narayanaswamy, aged about 29 years, R/at. No. 145, 3rd Stage, Near Sakthi School, Chikka Nekkundi Layout, Varthur, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore-560087, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **VINAYA .N** to **NIRNAY RAJESH REDDY,** vide affidavit dated 28.02.2026, sworn to before Prakasha .C, Advocate & Notary, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Ms. KANIKA LAMBOLE, Aged about 20 years, D/o. Vijay Lambole, resident of No.N78, Anuprakash, Ground Floor, 6th Main Road, Sanchar Nagar, Thantsandra, Bangalore -560077 have changed my name from LAMBOLE KANIKA VIJAY to KANIKA LAMBOLE vide Affidavit Dated: 27/02/2026 sworn before advocate and notary D. Rajanna, Bangalore**

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **MADHUSUDHAN S** S/o Srinivas R.J, aged about 33 years, residing at No.1268/A, 3rd Cross, Ashok Nagar, Bengaluru - 560050., have changed my name from **MADHUSUDAN S** to **MADHUSUDHAN.S**, vide affidavit dated 25/2/2026 sworn to before Prakasha C Advocate and Notary Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **NIRMALA KOLLI**, residing at Villament No. 6, Esteem North Wood, Near Ramanshree California Resort, Blueberry Street, Bengaluru-560064, have changed my name from **NIRMALA KOLLI** to **NIRMALA REDDY KOLLI** vide affidavit sworn before Notary C R Seetharam, Mysuru, dated 06-02-2026

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **NANDITHA.R,** D/o Ravindra N, age 22 years, R/at No. 13, 1st Floor, 1st Main, Mahendra Singh Layout, Off Chunchaghatta Main Road, Doddakallasandra, Bengaluru-560062 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **NANDITA.R** to **NANDITHA.R,** henceforth I shall be known and called as **NANDITHA.R** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 28th Feb. 2026, swown before Advocate and Notary **MAHESHA.J.J** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **NIHAL MAHMOOD MAKHDOOMI**, S/o Mahmood Ahmad Makhdoomi, R/o No.08 Viji Niwas, near Yashas Vidya Kendra, Vivekananda Nagar Chikkabanavara, Bengaluru - 560090, have changed my name from **NIHAL MAHMOOD MAKHDOOMI** to **NIHAL** vide affidavit dated 27.02.2026, sworn before notary Anuradha D, Bengaluru.

AFFIDAVIT
I, No. 14368964H Ex-Havildar VELOPA OBILESU, Unit 219 Med Regt, residing at #12, Kaveri block, Sri Tirumala Sarovar Apart Singasandra, Bengaluru – 560068, hereby inform that my wife's name has been changed from **C UMA DEVI to VELOPA UMADEVI** and her Date of Birth corrected from 06 Aug 1967 to 15 Jun 1967 as per affidavit sworn before B.M. Chandrashekar, Advocate & Notary Public, Bangalore on 10 Feb 2026.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, KARANAM SAMYUKTHA, W/o Karanam Manoj Kumar, aged about 37 years, residing at No 9A/359, Vidyanagar, Kalyandurgam, Ananthapuramu, Andhra Pradesh 515761, presently at Bangalore - Flat no 206, Sai Patham Towers, 3rd Main Road, Coffee Board Layout, Kempapura, Bangalore 560024, have changed my name from **U Samyuktha Reddy to Karanam Samyuktha** vide Affidavit dated 02-02-2026, sworn before Advocate & Notary Diwakar .N Kagewad, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Rekha Gidadapalya Padmanabhaiah, W/o. Lokesh Kumar Bangalore Narayana, R/at No. 66, 6th Main, 4th Block, SBI Officers Colony, Basaveshwaranagar, Bengaluru-560079, Karnataka, India. I have changed my name from **REKHA LOKESH** to **REKHA GIDADAPALYA PADMANABHAIAH** Vide affidavit dated 25.02.2026, Sworn before Advocate & Notary H S Sakalesh Aradhya, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **BALAKRISHNA**, S/o **Bhimarao Gangadhar Patil,** R/at No. G-1702/1703 Shriram Greenfield, Budigere Cross Road, Bommenahalli Post Mandur District Bengaluru-560049, have changed my name to **BALAKRISHNA B PATIL,** vide affidavit dt:23.02.2026 before Notary **A. Prabhakar,** Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **KAVANA KOGILWADI RAJASHEKAR,** R/o Mathavara Biccoduh, Belur Taluq, Hassan District, Karnataka-573 215 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **KAVANA VIKRAM GARJE** (old name) to **KAVANA KOGILWADI RAJASHEKAR** (new name), henceforth I shall be known and called as **KAVANA KOGILWADI RAJASHEKAR** (new name) for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 28-02-2026, sworn before Advocate and Notary **PRAKASHA.C** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **MOHAMMED IBRAHIM**, aged about 24 years, S/o. Mohammed Akbar, R/o. No. 38/3, 4th Cross, Dinnur Main Road, Opp. Priya Gold Jewellery, Kausar Nagar, R.T. Nagar Post, Bangalore North, Bangalore-560032, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **Mohammad Ibrahim** to **Mohammed Ibrahim**, vide affidavit dated 27.02.2026, sworn to before G. Dayananda, Advocate & Notary, Govt. of India, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, VIJAYAKUMAR BHAT, R/o: #14, Kadave Sirsi, Bommanalli Uttara Kannada, Karnataka 581402 have changed my name to VIJAYKUMAR BHAT for all purposes affidavit dated 28/02/2026 sworn before advocate and notary B M CHANDRASHEKAR., Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **YASHWANTH G A, aged about 28 years, S/o ANAND GN, residing at # 62, Nagesh Layout Main Road, Kadabagere Cross, Magadi Main Road, Mutturayaswamy Temple, Kadabagere, Bangalore, Karnataka 562130 . hereby declare that YASHAWANTH G A to YASHWANTH G A** Both the names belong to one and the same person i.e., myself only. vide affidavit dated: 28.02.2026 before Advocate and Notary Rupesh Kumar .N, Bangalore

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Niveditha Ramesh Parayil, D/o. Mr. Ramesh Seetharaman, aged about 24 years, R/at No.221, Block 1 G2 Ganga Chelston, Silver Spring Layout, Munnekoala, Bangalore North, Bengaluru - 560037. I have changed my name from '**NIVEDITHA RAMESH PARAYIL**' to '**NIVEDITHA RAMESH**'. Vide affidavit dated 27.02.2026, Sworn before Advocate & Notary Indira S S, Bengaluru.

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A concept-first thriller with a mythic edge

A SHARADHAA

HAYAGRRIVA opens with an idea that instantly creates curiosity. The film follows a medical mafia working in a slightly futuristic world instead of a familiar crime setting. Drawing from mythological images that combine human and animal forms, the film builds tension around disturbing murders that wipe out personal identity. The writing tries to do something different, using mythology as the base for a science-driven thriller. Framed as a twist-filled investigation, the story first explains the meaning of the title before moving into a chilling hunt for the person behind the crimes.

Debutant director Raghukumar OR places the narrative around Arjun (Dhanveerrah), a young officer facing his first major case. His introduction through a title track highlights his physical strength and discipline, yet the film keeps him grounded as a cop focused on procedure. The tension rises as shocking discoveries emerge, surgically altered bodies left in locations without surveillance, moments that both surprise and deepen the film's dark mood.

As the case widens, the narrative moves from a procedural tone into a psychological space. Missing-person reports from across Karnataka increase the scale of the mystery, making identification difficult and adding unease. The symbolic nature of the bodies reflect mythological ideas, hinting that the killer acts out of belief rather than impulse. Alongside the investigation is a track involving Dr Aishwarya (Sanjana Anand), married to Arjun. Whether she becomes the prey, or helps to give an end to this crime, keeps us hooked.

HAYAGRRIVA
Director: Raghukumar
Cast: Dhanveerrah, Sanjana Anand, Suneel Rao, Gilli Nata, Sadhu Kokila and Ashwin Haasan

Dhanveerrah handles the police role with sincerity, while Dr Aishwarya (Sanjana Anand) adds emotional and intellectual balance to the narrative. Suneel Rao turns out to be a pleasant surprise, adding a distinct energy. Ashwin Hassan acts as an effective companion to the audience through the investigation. Support from Ashwini Gowda, Gilli Nata, and Sadhu Kokila keeps the ensemble lively while adding lighter moments where needed.

RATING 3/5

The film's key strength lies in its premise: a medical-mafia angle connected to mythological imagery. The first half sustains the mystery, while the latter half focuses more on the psychology behind the crimes. Writer Chethan Sid and director Raghukumar tie the title meaningfully to a character's perspective, giving the reveal emotional weight.

Technically, the film uses a restrained visual approach. Low-lit crime scenes maintain a sense of isolation, and important reveals unfold at a calm pace. This measured rhythm may feel slow to some, but it suits the reflective tone the film aims for.

By the final stretch, the film moves beyond a simple whodunit and begins exploring ideological obsession. The killer's ideology and Arjun's determination mirror each other in subtle ways.

What may stay with viewers is not the brutality but the questions the story raises about identity, belief, and the thin line between innovation and arrogance. *Hayagrriva* presents its ideas with confidence, leaving space for the audience to decide how deeply they connect with them. That openness becomes part of the overall experience, elevating the mystery into a topic to ponder.

DANCING NUDGED ME CLOSER TO BECOMING AN ACTOR: ASHWIN

With Kichcha Sudeep unveiling the title, the coming-of-age drama marks a personal milestone for the newcomer

A still from the film

Ashwin and Priyanka Achar

CE FEATURES

Ashwin's childhood wish to face the camera has finally been realised with his debut film, *Celebrity*, a project that mirrors his own journey of aspiration and persistence. The title was launched with Sudeep unveiling the title teaser. Produced by JDS leader and former minister SR Mahesh and Sushma Ashwin under the Gowri Arts banner and directed by Kiran Vishwanath, the film pairs Ashwin with Elumale actor Priya Achar as the female lead, while Sangeetha returns to the screen in a pivotal role. Speaking about his debut, Ashwin explains *Celebrity* as a reflection of the spark that began in his childhood. "The title explains the journey of a boy who dreams of becoming an actor. As a child, his mother would take him to theatres, and the whistles and claps fascinated him, and he wanted that love," he explains the central premise of the film. "The narrative follows a youngster through college, where he discovers dance, experiments with becoming a YouTuber, and slowly navigates the uncertain road to recognition. It is about whether those aspirations finally turn into reality forms the core of *Celebrity*," Ashwin adds.

Before stepping into films, Ashwin built his career as an entrepreneur, but cinema remained his ultimate dream. Even after PUC, I worked as an assistant director on a couple of films that, unfortunately, were never released. But I'm glad my patience is finally paying off," he says. The actor credits his family, especially his wife Sushma, for being his anchor. "She has been my biggest support and is also co-producing the film with Mahesh sir," he shares, while adding that dancing, which has been his long-time passion, nudged him closer to becoming an actor. The film has music by Vijay Gummineni, stunts by Ravivarma, and dance choreography by Johnny.

At the launch event, Sudeep emphasised that his presence was driven by his long association with Mahesh. "I have known him for many years and he is very dear to me. Making a film may be easy, but for it to grow, everyone's support is important. I wish the team the very best," he said. He also praised the teaser's craft, highlighting the music by Vijay Gummineni, a protege of Arjun Janya, known for lending his voice to a song in Ambi Ning Vayassaytho. "The teaser is technically beautiful, and the hero has danced well," Sudeep noted.

Sudeep at the title launch of Celebrity

A respectful ode that needed a stronger narrative

A SHARADHAA

A drama from veteran filmmaker SV Rajendra Singh Babu, *Veera Kambala* is steeped in coastal life where tradition, pride, and faith intersect. Inspired by real conversations and debates around the revival of Kambala races, the film plays out as both a cultural mirror and a fictional feud. The intention is heartfelt. Yet the treatment moves back and forth between observational storytelling and old-school melodrama.

The narrative tracks the long-standing rivalry between the Manjotti Guthu and Mittabail Mahabala families, a clash that halted the famed buffalo race for almost 68 years. Its return becomes more than a comeback; it turns into a moment of closure tied to honour, guilt, and identity. Instead of digging deeper into the social and political undercurrents, the film stays at a broader level, using the feud mainly to show how Kambala is inseparable from life in Tulunadu. An opening stretch in Dubai introduces Adithya and Shobraj amid camel racing and betting, drawing a parallel between business and belief. Though relevant in idea, it feels indulgent and holds back the emotional entry into the story. The film finds its rhythm once it shifts to coastal Karnataka, where rituals, omens, and community ties are observed with care. Still, the pace dips as these details pile up without always pushing events forward.

The latter half holds more grip, especially in the courtroom face-offs between Prakash Raj and Ravi Shankar. Their exchanges on ideology and tradition elevate the dramatic tension. The scenes carry a stage-like intensity that works in parts, even when the dialogue leans more toward explanation than layered confrontation.

Actors portraying the racing community bring a lived-in quality, particularly in moments that show the care, training, and reverence for the buffaloes. The final race unfolds with scale and visual clarity, delivering the spectacle the film steadily builds toward, even if the emotional high point feels somewhat restrained.

VEERA KAMBALA
Director: Rajendra Singh Babu
Cast: Adithya, Prakash Raj, Ravi Shankar, Naveen D. Padil, Gopinath Bhat, and Bojaraj Vamanjur

RATING 2.5/5

On the technical front, the film has a retro texture. Songs, action beats, and dramatic cues follow familiar patterns from an earlier era. This lends warmth but also makes the storytelling feel slightly dated. The music blends naturally with the coastal mood, though it doesn't linger much beyond the race portions.

Veera Kambala stands as a warm salute to a tradition that has shaped the region across generations. Its strength lies in its honesty and cultural gaze, but the narrative never quite reaches the emotional weight it strives for. What remains is a film that respects its subject more than it truly pulls you in, hinting that a tighter, more centred approach might have matched the importance of its theme.

Two *GI Joe* films in development

CE FEATURES

PARAMOUNT is developing two new films based on the *GI Joe* franchise. Writer Max Landis is writing one, with actor-writer Danny McBride working on another, according to reports.

Landis, the son of director John Landis, has previously written for films like *Chronicle* (2012), *American Ultra* (2015), and *Victor Frankenstein* (2015). Meanwhile, McBride has created and headlined *The Righteous Gemstones* and has appeared in films like *Up in the Air* (2009) and *Alien: Covenant* (2017). GI Joe is a series of toys created by Hasbro. GI Joe: Rise of Cobra (2009), was the first film adaptation.

Dakota Johnson, Saoirse Ronan team up for a film

CE FEATURES

ACTORS Dakota Johnson, Saoirse Ronan, Jessie Buckley and Josh O'Connor are all set to star in the upcoming adaptation of *Three Incestuous Sisters*, the 2005 best-selling novel by Audrey Niffenegger. Italian director Alice Rohrwacher, known for *The Wonders* (2014) and *La chimera* (2023), will be directing the film from a script she co-wrote with Ottessa Moshfegh.

Dakota Johnson was last seen in the romantic drama *Materialists*, alongside Chris Evans and Pedro Pascal. Saoirse Ronan, who earned critical acclaim for *The Outrun* (2024), is currently filming the *Beatles* biopic directed by Sam Mendes, in which she takes on the role of Linda McCartney. Similarly, Jessie Buckley's performance in *Hamnet*, directed by Chloe Zhao, earned her an Academy Award nomination for Best Actress and a Golden Globe victory.

Indrajit Lankesh's *Jai Hind Jai Sindh* brings Jaya Prada, Mahesh Manjrekar and Zarina Wahab together

Indrajit Lankesh

CE FEATURES

FILMMAKER Indrajit Lankesh is returning to Hindi cinema with *Jai Hind Jai Sindh*, following his earlier outing Shakeela. The upcoming film is currently in its final stages of production, with the team currently shooting in Uttarakhand.

Set against the backdrop of India's Partition, the film is a period romance that explores the experiences of Sindhi community as they navigate displacement and rebuild their lives. The narrative focuses on personal relationships to reflect the emotional and cultural impact of the time, placing the story within the broader theme of unity in diversity.

The cast is led by Jaya Prada and Mahesh Manjrekar, with supporting performances from Vikram Kochhar, Zarina Wahab, Upasana Singh, and Amit Behl. Produced by Samy's Entertainment, the project will also introduce four new actors to the Hindi film industry. The film's motion poster was recently unveiled at a press event in Dehradun, marking a key promotional step. The makers are planning a theatrical release around mid-2026.

Lankesh, who earlier introduced Deepika Padukone in Aishwarya, continues his practice of working with a mix of established actors and newcomers. With Jai Hind Jai Sindh, he returns to Hindi cinema with a film that combines a historical setting with a character-driven narrative.